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# HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR

With  
Chronology  
of  
Important  
Events

BEST





HISTORY OF  
**The World War**

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With Chronology of  
Important Events

BY  
**THOMAS R. BEST**  
//

A CLEAR, CONCISE ACCOUNT OF  
THE GREATEST OF ALL WARS,  
FROM AN AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

**STREET & SMITH CORPORATION**  
Publishers :: 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York

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History of The World War

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# HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PEACE BEFORE WAR.

When, to the world peoples, the news was flashed of the Austrian tragedy of June 28, 1914, there came no warning that it was of dread import. The nations journeyed almost to the brink of war in ignorance of its nearness. In America especially, if, a week later, one thought of the fateful assassination at all, it was only as the latest of a long series of such happenings in an unhappy empire. In Europe, men made their usual commercial, political, personal plans for August and September, with no intimation that these plans would never be realized. Each nation had its problems at home and its differences abroad, but the settlement of these problems did not call for the slaughter of the youth of the land. Europe was armed, but Europe had always been armed; there had been threats of war, just as there had always been threats, or worse. But in the last generation a strong sentiment for peace had spread. The more democratic nations had come to think of war between the great powers as a thing of the past. So it was that when every newspaper in the world carried the black news that the long threatened European war had begun and that nation after nation was being hurled headlong into the conflict, the wide world gasped in utter surprise at the bare fact of it. The immensity of it dazed the nations; the wantonness of it angered them. A great outcry arose against war and against autocratic power that could, without warning, convulse civilization.

A sword had hung over Europe for years before this, but it had dropped without causing a general conflict. It was not noticed that the sword had been hung up again. This sword was the Balkan question. For a generation it had been an axiom that the Balkan states would one day be the cause of a general European war. The date of this war had been forecast many times but each year saw the war clouds dissipate. To the world the Balkan states meant, not races of people, not personalities, but a problem that endangered the peace of western civilization. Their national aspirations were unheeded or used but as pawns of empire. Oppressed by Turkey, they were suppressed by European diplomats in the interests of their own safety.

With the aid of Russia, parts of the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Roumanian peoples had won their freedom in 1878 and later. The redeemed sections heard constantly the cries of their blood brothers under the Turkish yoke. There could be no assured peace until Turkey was driven from her victims. Sporadic uprisings occurred yearly. The only powers that could cope with the Sultan would not move. European jealousy over the disposal of Constantinople, strategically so precious, prevented an earlier solution of the Balkan question. None of the five great nations would permit any of the others to control Constantinople.

The Balkan peoples grew desperate as years passed, and at last, in 1912, Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria put aside their local jealousies and allied themselves to fight their ancient enemy. To the surprise of the world, they easily defeated Turkey and drove her from the strip of Europe, reaching across the Balkans to the Adriatic Sea, that for centuries she had possessed and misruled. The Turk was confined to Constantinople and to a very small strip of Europe besides. A few months after this war, so completely

successful, the conflict broke out again. The Balkan partners could not agree on the spoils, thanks to the interference of Austria-Hungary. Bulgaria suddenly attacked her two allies and was quickly and soundly beaten.

To the chancellors of Europe, the great fact was that the Balkan explosion, so long dreaded, had taken place without involving the great powers. The perplexing question seemed to be on the way to a solution, complete and permanent; the menace seemed to be removed. The opposite was true, could the world but have known. The Balkan wars made the Great War only more certain, served only to fix a time for it. Serbia's success blocked the plans of Germany.

But the world did not know and it breathed easier. There was activity in all the arts of peace. There was social progress, vast commerce, that war would imperil if not destroy. The backward nations were stirring from the sleep of centuries and were forming commercial, political, and spiritual connection with modern civilization. After long years of poverty, Spain, Italy, and Greece were finding new prosperity. Norway, Sweden, and Holland, long prosperous, were still more so. Belgium was teeming with activity. Her looms, for centuries the source of Europe's finery, were busier than ever. Russia was recovering from her defeat of ten years previous and was putting her industries and transportation on a modern business basis.

Each year saw France gain new prosperity. Crippled at the close of the Franco-Prussian War, she had become again a great industrial nation, drawing profits from her many well managed colonies and from all the world besides. France was importing one and one-half billion dollars worth of merchandise, and her exports were nearly as great. Germany and England each sold her an equal amount. England was her best customer. Merchandise alone did not meas-

ure the standing of France. Besides being an intellectual center, she was a great capitalist nation; the railways, mines, factories of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the two Americas owed their financing to French money.

Her alliance with Russia had served her well during the years of military and political weakness. It had served to hold off Germany. In 1898 England and France almost went to war over rival claims in Africa. But, as if she heard the triumphant laugh of Germany at seeing her chief rivals destroy each other, France, at the critical moment, drew back. France and England both saw the light and a few years later formed an "entente cordiale." This informal alliance carried France through several crises with Germany at a time when Russia was weak. But with all her military strength, with all her alliances, France did not want war. She could not hope to cope with Germany except at a terrible cost; she had too much to lose, too little to gain.

England, for centuries engaged in every European quarrel, was more and more disinclined to risk a war, much less provoke one. A large portion of the world's richest lands were within her realms. The strategic points of the sea lanes of the world were England's. With all her empire, Britain was not in an imperial mood during these later years. Her bonds with Canada and Australia were wholly subject to the will of the latter, and Britain was content to have it so. There were strong anti-imperialistic parties in England and they were necessarily pacifist. Public sentiment in England would not have supported an aggressive war.

England's commerce was world wide. Half of the world's ocean merchandise was carried in English ships. Her own manufactures were of immense proportions. She supplied the material for the building of bridges in Siberia and Rhodesia; the mining

machinery that extracted the wealth of the Andes was made in England and manned by English engineers. The steamboats that sailed the inland waters of China and Africa were built in the firths of Scotland. Besides carrying most of the three and one-half billion dollars worth of goods exported each year from her mills and shops, Britain's ships carried much of the commerce of other nations. American harvests were sent to Argentine. Texas cotton to Manchester looms, American meat to Sweden, Chilean nitrate to Germany, African rubber to Ohio factories, in English ships. Because of this immense trade, the people of Great Britain were able to buy four billion dollars worth of goods from other countries. England's welfare called for continuance of peace.

America, never an active force in European politics, was an interested observer of the accumulation of armaments and of the alignments of the nations. Until the last two decades, concerned almost wholly with her own internal affairs, America, at the beginning of the twentieth century, had new outside interests. Her protectorship of the Western Hemisphere brought her into vital contact with the commercial nations. Her foreign commerce had begun to mount during this period until it promised to rival that of England at no far distant date. Europe bought much of its food from America. The manufacturing nations drew from her raw materials to the value of hundreds of millions.

American influence was all for peace. The thought of world-embracing war was abhorrent to statesmen and people alike. American public opinion did not hold a world war probable, hardly possible. It was thought that the larger nations had become too humanitarian to fight for dynasties and empire, too intelligent to imperil industrial vitality. There was no war party, in power or out of it; no wish to fight nor any reason for fighting any of the great world powers.



Germany, in 1914, occupied a favorable place among the great nations. Her commerce was increasing twice as fast as that of England. While not yet equal to that of the latter, it still made an impressive total. The foreign commerce alone amounted to the enormous sum of two billion dollars and more in exports, and nearly as much in imports. Of these totals, eight hundred million dollars worth was carried to and from overseas ports. Not a nation but felt the influence of German science, of German philosophy; not a region but used goods "made in Germany." The children of Russia, Spain, Argentine, of Maine and California, all played with German toys. She supplied more iron and steel than England. In certain chemicals her trade was practically a monopoly.

German ships sailed every sea. She vied with England for the carrying trade of the world. More American goods were carried in German vessels than by ships flying the Stars and Stripes. In the Far East alone one of the great German lines had forty ships serving China and the East Indies. More than two thousand steamships flew the German flag. England alone had greater tonnage, twenty million tons of merchant marine to Germany's five millions. Germany meant to lessen the discrepancy.

In all the world Germany had nothing to be afraid of. She was too powerful to fear attack. There was no combination of nations that dared to make an unprovoked assault upon her. Her ships sailed the seven seas, entered the ports of the British Empire on equal terms with England's ships. Germany sold to one small English colony, Ceylon, more than a million dollars worth of goods yearly, and the trade with Canada and Australia was immensely greater. England herself was Germany's best customer. But Germany was not satisfied.

Because of the German nation's political and commercial ambition, millions of men were to spring to

arms; Germans were to leave their factories, don a uniform and march against their neighbors; Frenchmen were to bid a sudden farewell—many until eternity—to their families; Russians were to leave their farms; men in Canada and Australia were to be aroused from their quiet homes to fight for the right in far-off lands; Italians, Serbs, Turks were to enter the war; Africans, Asiatics, men from every continent were to take part in the conflict. Because, in order to realize their projects, the German people had given autocratic power to their rulers. Destruction was to come to magnificent cathedrals, objects of pride for centuries; the splendid cities of France and Belgium were to be laid in ruins more desolate than if an earthquake or a fire had ravaged them; the wreckage of ships of all nations was to litter the ocean bed—the great *Lusitania* was to be sunk; kings and thrones were to tumble as so much rubbish, and mighty empires were to become the playthings of fanatics. Because Germany aspired to lordship over other races, the schoolboys of 1914 were to become the soldiers of 1918 and were to meet death before they grew to manhood; the kind hearts of cheery peasants were to be filled with undying bitterness, the consuming fires of hatred were to sweep over nations; Germans were to forget mercy and justice and honor; children in England were to be killed, women in Belgium were to be outraged; assassins were to destroy half the Armenian people, thousands of their women and children were to die of thirst on the deserts of Mesopotamia or from torture at the hands of the Turks; the jungles of Africa, the steppes of Russia, the mountains of Italy, the plains of Flanders, were to be sprayed with the blood of broken men; thousands, millions, were to die of starvation; the best blood, the most splendid manhood of France and England was to be sacrificed to stay the lawless might of Germany.

Because the German Kaiser saw, in the assassina-

tion of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, a pretext for the consummation of imperial plans, the Great European War began.

## CHAPTER II.

### GERMANY'S DREAM OF EMPIRE.

Successful competition was not enough for Germany. A degree of present prosperity and an assured future that would have satisfied a democratic nation was not enough for a people with imperial ideas. Germany looked at the map of the world and saw many things that did not please her. She had an immense population in an area smaller than Texas. Nowhere in the world was there a place to which Germans could emigrate without passing outside the German Empire and outside of German control. Germany desired to retain authority over Germans in whatever part of the world they might be.

Germany, as a completed nation, had come into this organized world too late to take part in the organization. For centuries the Teutonic people were divided into many small and a few large principalities. They seldom acted in common, were arrayed against one another in the Thirty Years War, in the Napoleonic conflicts, and at other periods. It was not until just before the Franco-Prussian War that the German states united in a confederation. At the close of that conflict the confederation was proclaimed an empire at Versailles in 1871. The King of Prussia was crowned emperor and Germany became one nation; more than eight hundred years later than England, three hundred years later than France.

In 1871, Germany had all of Europe that was rightfully hers, and some that was not. Outside of Europe she held nothing. All the great discoveries of land had been made by other nations and the choice



regions colonized. Africa, the last continent to be explored, was then at the point of partition. But Germany showed little interest in colonies. Her pilot, Bismarck, had his eyes elsewhere. When it was too late, Germany discovered that colonies were desirable. England had claimed a part of equatorial Africa, France, nearly all the vast region of North Africa, small Belgium obtained control of the Congo Free State, an immense territory of great wealth. Only four districts in Africa, two of them very small, were left for Germany. Six island groups in the Pacific Ocean were acquired. But the population of all Germany's colonies was scarcely more than twelve million, only a thirtieth part of that of India, England's richest possession.

Germany was envious of the British Empire, while despising its strength. She called it an accidental empire, with no cohesion, needing only a vigorous attack to fall apart. She was envious of the great domains of Canada and Australia, that presented the fields for development that were her great need. Germany believed in her ability to rule as much of the world as she might acquire. She saw great peoples here and there that needed only to be mastered and organized according to her methods in order to become productive in her interest. Such dependencies would have immense buying power. Germany knew she could sell vastly more goods to India than England was doing, even though England yearly sold to her principal colonies goods of greater value than to Germany, France, and the United States.

With such views, Germany set herself to the amazing task of rearranging the world to suit herself. Other nations have coveted; German imperialism was literally true, based on far reaching plans, on a will to succeed, not merely on desire. She looked abroad and made her program. There were lands and peoples far off that one day should come into her empire; but

they could wait. There were lands and peoples nearer at hand that she would control first, and to gain these was to be her immediate task. She coveted these lands that she might pattern them after the German heart. It mattered not that her future empire should include parts of Russia, France, all of Belgium, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Asia Minor, parts of the British Empire.

German imperialism grew unheeded. All through the early years of the Kaiser's reign the idea spread and gained converts. The great manufacturers had to be won, had to put themselves under government control. The dazzling prize of commercial monopoly, of a vast empire, was ever dangled before their eyes. The Kaiser in a speech declared that no territorial changes should be made anywhere in the world without Germany's consent. Her first attempts at expansion were unfortunate. Germany was hostile toward America during the war with Spain, and the memorable incident in Manila Bay, whereby a German admiral attempted to browbeat Admiral Dewey from his position as conqueror, was perhaps the first intimation America had of the new German diplomacy. Five years later, Germany attempted to gain a foothold in Venezuela, but she speedily discovered it would be only at the price of war with the United States. Nearer home, the Kaiser meddled with the affairs of France and England without gaining any decided advantage.

Not at all daunted by first failures, Germany persisted in plans for expansion. Her lack of success was used to show the people at home that a widespread conspiracy existed to throttle her. Some time during the first years of the twentieth century a concrete project took form. Since England controlled the seas, Germany would first control the land. The idea of a great continuous empire in Europe and Asia, which was to be known as the Middle Europe

plan, took shape. Russia was on the east, France and England on the west. Neither would be suitable for Germany's empire except as she could seize upon strategic points. But to the southeast, through Austria, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, and on to the Far East Germany saw her path of empire. Austria-Hungary was to be a partner, the others were to be dependencies. India was in the plan, not for the immediate future, but as an inevitable result. Germany was thinking in terms of centuries. Egypt was to be a prize, since it commanded the sea lanes between Europe and Asia. The many alien peoples of this region were to be trained and molded for German purposes as only Germany knew how to do it. The splendor of such an empire took possession of the German mind. Was not Germany the most enlightened nation in the world? Was she not the natural leader of the backward nations? Were not her people the dominant race?

An empire in South America or Africa would be accessible only by sea, and as long as England held potential control of the sea such an empire would be subject to loss in time of war. But an empire such as Germany now planned would have no maritime liabilities. Not only would it be invulnerable to England's fleet, the only world force the Germans really feared, but it also would strike a deadly blow at the British Empire. This proposed empire would have unbroken communication by land between all parts. It held rich territory where Germany's surplus population could settle and still be a part of the Fatherland. There would be a vast multitude of men to train and arm against the future menace of Russian hordes. Germany would be transformed from a position of fancied disadvantage to one of absolute superiority.

This was the great dream of empire that Germany determined to realize. It mattered not that fulfillment would destroy the independence of nations, disrupt the British Empire, throttle France, Russia, and

Holland. Such ends were to be desired, from Germany's point of view. Other parts of western Europe were necessary to Germany's program and she was determined to have them some day.

Germany felt cooped up from the sea. As far as navigation was concerned, she had as free access to the high seas as England had. But strategically, she felt at a disadvantage. Every ocean-going German ship passed through English waters, at the tactical mercy of the English fleet. The fact that England never moved a finger to hinder the passage of any nation's commerce, made no difference to Germany. There must be "free" ports;—*i.e.*, not subject to control. Germany therefore included Antwerp, Calais, and Boulogne in the coming empire. She was not satisfied to be able to import the raw materials for her factories from the ends of the earth; she must have the raw materials under her control, such of them as were within practical reach. She counted Bismarck as short-sighted for not taking more of the coal and iron regions of France in 1871.

Germany's campaign for empire must first begin at home. The people must be taught to wish for expansion, to know themselves for supermen, worthy of world power. They must be taught to know the army as the one vital need, to bear the burden of a large navy. They must be taught to despise the French and English, so that a war of conquest should seem right. They must be taught to fear Russia, so that they would bear the increasing burdens of armament without complaint. They must be taught to believe that their conquest of nations would bring the incalculable blessings of German organization to the conquered peoples. Such a deliberate campaign for such outrageous ambitions was nowhere in the civilized world possible, except in Germany. In other ages, world conquerors had planned and won, or failed. They had moved their armies as unthinking pawns

that knew not why they fought. Not since the days of imperial Rome had a whole nation been imbued with the consuming idea of its right to rule.

And so the Great War crept upon an unsuspecting world. There were alarmists who shouted and wrote warnings of Germany's warlike intentions; but they were unheeded. To the rest of the world such deliberate planning was unbelievable. Yet the nations were cautious enough to prepare defenses. England kept her fleet at a standard because of her island position. France and Russia maintained armaments because Germany did. But all three nations cried aloud at the intolerable burden of militarism and wished for an agreement to limit expenditure. England publicly proposed to cease the building of battleships for a period, but the offer merely convinced the Germans that they had nothing to fear from England, and served only to spur them on.

Germany doubted not that she would attain the first steps of her project as easily as she had won the Franco-Prussian War. But she spared no pains, overlooked no possible means of insuring success. The army was ready for instant action. But the armies of other countries must be unready. Subsidized agents in every foreign country worked secretly and publicly against national defense. She took advantage of every quarrel in England, France, Russia, to paralyze rivalry. Her spies were everywhere. They made maps of almost every square mile of a possible campaign ground. They were in the government offices of all nations. While Germany's horizon was the east, it was in western Europe that any effective opposition would be encountered. England and Russia were the natural enemies of her plan and France was the ally of both. German diplomats strove to disrupt the alliance, and failing, pursued their course, convinced of success, opposition or no opposition.

It is not yet clear whether Germany chose in advance



a time to strike, or being ready, decided to move whenever a favorable time should come. In either case, the time arrived in the summer of 1914. There can be little doubt but that the German leaders half expected to gain the opening advantages without war. Serbia was to be made practically a subject nation, and this done, Germany with her allies would have, at one step, a continuous empire from Hamburg to Bagdad. It seemed so small a step, so easy of accomplishment. It was not then understood how complete was German dominance in Bulgaria and Turkey. Of the three great powers, a change in the status of Serbia would affect directly only Russia. If Russia did not make a move, France would not. England was not threatened—apparently. And Germany believed that Russia would not fight for Serbia. Seven years before, Austria had annexed Bosnia. Russia protested, but at a threat of war from Germany, withdrew in defeat. Germany told a half truth when she protested she did not want war. She intended to seize, through Austria, the first of her spoils, and she hoped it would be done without war. Possessed of overweening confidence, the army wanted war; flushed with power, the statesmen risked a conflict as a possible cost of empire. Both military leaders, who were dominant, and the statesmen, determined to go ahead.

June 28, 1914, will be ever memorable as the most fateful date in the world's history. The event that occurred then shook the foundations of human society. Intense excitement prevailed in Germany and Austria-Hungary, the leaders realizing the Day had come, the army feeling the undercurrent of preparation. Germany made final mercantile, financial, naval and military preparation. She could not have wished for a better time, as she saw the condition of her possible opponents. France was in an uproar over the Cailaux case and all parties were denouncing one another.

England appeared to be on the verge of civil war over the Irish problem. All of the British people were taking sides. The English colonies were far away, and Germany mocked the thought of effective military opposition from them. As German naval officers drank again to "The Day," it was with the knowledge that the day was near.

Nearly a month elapsed between the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the Austrian demands on Serbia. These demands were so unusual that it plainly was not expected that Serbia would concede them. A storm of protest arose from the great powers, and an exchange of notes began, those from England and France offering suggestions for peace, while Germany declined to interfere with her ally. Russia at once warned Austria-Hungary that she could not stand by and see Serbia conquered. Austria pronounced the matter as one concerning only Serbia and herself. The Serbian reply, conciliatory in the extreme, was hardly considered, and on July 28th, Austria-Hungary declared war. And now excitement reigned in every capital of the world. The exchange of notes became an almost hourly event, as England and France saw themselves being drawn into war. Their influence for peace was still exerted to the uttermost. In the last hours of July, it became manifest that Russia would support Serbia by force of arms. Too late Austria tried to withdraw from the brink of the awful conflict. But the imperial plans of the Kaiser had been set in motion and now Germany took the lead to insure that there should be no faint-heartedness. The Russians were commanded to stop the mobilization of armies, and the threat being unheeded, Germany, on August 1st, declared war on Russia. France was asked to give her attitude, with the alternative of surrendering Verdun, Toul and Nancy if she remained neutral. The reply

being what was expected, Germany, on August 3d, declared war on France. The Great War had begun.

But the war was to be far greater than Germany anticipated. England had not been counted on as a probable opponent. The German ambassador made frantic efforts to keep her neutral. And when, following Germany's invasion of Belgium, England, on August 4th, declared war, Germany might well have wished to turn back the clock of time five days. For her great dream of empire was doomed.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE GERMAN RUSH INTO FRANCE.

At the outbreak of the war, Germany found herself with two battle fronts. Strong foes were east and west of her. This situation, to a weak nation, would have been almost instantly fatal. But there are certain advantages in a central position, and Germany prepared to avoid the danger while making the fullest use of the advantage. A network of railways on both frontiers made possible a rapid concentration of troops at any point. This was to prove Germany's greatest asset. It had been noticed that Germany was building more railways near the Belgian frontier as well as on the Russian and French borders. The Belgian government was alarmed, and unofficial conferences with England were held to plan military aid in case of invasion. Nothing more practical than documents came of it; documents that the Germans were to find later, and advertise as justification of their own invasion.

The strategic railways leading to Belgium were a vital part of Germany's war plans. She had determined to disregard her pledged word and to invade France through Belgium. There was a measure of advantage in this. Germany realized that her prob-



able enemies would have superior strength, and to offset it, she would strike a crushing blow before the enemy strength could be fully exerted. Russia, a huge country with poor transportation facilities, would necessarily be slow to mobilize. Russia could be disregarded for perhaps a month, and in that month Germany planned to crush France completely. This was a conception bolder and more vast than any military commander ever attempted. If successful, it would dwarf all the campaigns in the history of war. Germany's two recent wars had been won in a few weeks, in campaigns involving a few hundred thousand men. To repeat this on a scale comprising hundreds of miles of battlefield and millions of soldiers was the task Germany set for her generals. All her plans were for a short campaign; all the officers and men were fired with the expectation of capturing Paris in a month or six weeks. Thousands of medals were coined in advance of the event celebrating the triumphant entry.

Given the military necessity for a quick decision, Germany chose to advance through Belgium rather than directly across the French frontier. The reason for this choice was the nature of the ground. The entire French border is a region of high hills, rising in places to mountains. Armies are not easily deployed in such territory when it is strongly defended. German military leaders feared their armies could not advance rapidly enough through this region to win the quick victory they required; and the fighting throughout the war justified the opinion. The other road to France that led through Belgium, the ancient road followed by the armies of centuries, had no such natural obstacles. A flat country, thickly settled, with roads and railways for the rapid transit of huge armies.

The Germans chose this route and thereby incurred the condemnation of civilization. They first de-

manded of Belgium the right of passage, promising to withdraw after the war. King Albert replied "Belgium is a nation, not a road." The violation of Belgium was one of a long series of stupendous blunders. The plan of campaign, that of destroying the French armies by a quick blow, failed, and Belgium became a heavy liability to the German cause. It more than doubled the length of the western front; it became a death trap, a snare, a phantom of victory, to grasp which the life and strength of the German nation was sacrificed. It made certain the hostility of England. It ultimately brought the United States into the fray. It lost the war for Germany.

France had a magnificent army; how splendid the world did not suspect until war had tried it. Long dreading war, France had armed for defense where Germany had armed for conquest. The fortresses facing the German frontier were marvels of strength, and were believed to be impregnable. The French army of 1914 was not the army of 1870. France gave the keeping of her defenses to professional soldiers, not to politicians, and the trained specialists saved the day.

When war was imminent, Italy, as well as Germany, was a possible foe. Italy had for years been a partner with Germany and Austria-Hungary in the Triple Alliance. An attack from Italy as well as from Germany would have been serious indeed. But Italy refused to take part in an offensive war, and promptly informed France and England that she would remain neutral. This invaluable information greatly simplified the situation for France.

At the outbreak of war, French armies promptly carried the conflict over the frontier into Alsace and Lorraine. All France hailed with joy the attempt to regain the lost provinces. There were some successes at first; the French captured Mülhausen on August 8th, lost and retook it several times, lost it finally, and

thereafter, during the war, did not make a general advance along the southern end of the battle front. The campaign as a whole was a failure. In the Lorraine attack one French corps gave way entirely, the only time during the war that this was true. A large French army was imperiled and it was extricated only with the utmost heroism and the most skillful generalship. A certain general named Foch was in command of one corps in this section; needless to say it was not his corps that was routed. The French were thrown on the defensive, not only by the attacks in their immediate front, but by the situation in the north. The Germans were coming through Belgium!

Germany threw nineteen army corps, gathered into eight armies, into France and Belgium in the first rush, while seventeen more corps almost immediately followed. The world, accustomed to war in terms of regiments, suddenly began to read of the movements of millions of armed men. Impossible things had come to pass. Eight million soldiers were in battle lines in a few weeks after war began.

While a part of the German armies advanced through Alsace, Lorraine, and Luxemburg and engaged the French in a score of bloody battles, another part of them planned to slip through Belgium, turn the flank of the French, roll them eastward into a trap and compel surrender. On August 3d, the first of the German divisions crossed the Belgian frontier. The next day, having been refused passage through Liège, they attacked the forts, expecting only nominal resistance. It was then that the authors of Pan-Germanism faced another of their many miscalculations; the Belgians replied, shot for shot, with fearful effect upon ranks advancing in close order. How happy were those first Germans that fell! They escaped the long years of fighting and the humiliating defeat that followed.

For four days the German advance was held up.

Repeated assaults by their infantry was fruitless. The Anglo-American public, not realizing the magnitude of German preparation, cherished, during these few days, the hope that the foe would be stopped at the outset. Then came obscure reports that the forts had fallen, reports that told of gigantic guns, a single shell from which obliterated the strongest concrete fort. But the Belgians had proved themselves heroes. The gain to the Allied cause of the four days' delay at Liège was incalculable. The French had a respite in which to change their mobilization to meet the emergency. The English had time to come up. On August 10th the first British troops were landed in France. Two army corps under Sir John French disappeared somewhere into the battle zone. As an index to the enormous transportation problems of the armies of millions, this comparatively small British force required thirty-two trains daily for many days to move it from the French port to the battle front.

The world, hoping and expecting unreasonable things, thought that the French and English would go to the aid of the Belgians at Liège. Instead, it read of an apparently triumphant German procession. Villages and towns were engulfed. At Louvain the Belgians again attempted to hold the enemy, but on the 19th they retreated. To save Brussels from destruction, they did not defend it, and on August 20th the invading armies entered. Thereafter, for many days, long lines of gray clad German soldiers goose-stepped through the Belgian capital, gayly shouting that they were going to Paris.

The strong fortress of Namur was expected to hold the Germans even longer than had Liège. But they made no more infantry assaults on forts. The armies flowed around Namur while the 42-centimeter battered the forts to pieces. Namur fell on August 22d, and the Germans marched southward at full speed, confident of victory, in spite of the week or ten days' delay

in their schedule. The same day they engaged the French and English forces. At Charleroi the French, at Mons the British, fought fiercely but vainly. The Germans were in full swing and in overwhelming numbers. The Allied armies were quickly outflanked, and on the night of August 23d the French retreated. The British valiantly held on almost too long and were in danger of being cut off. By sheer valor they flung back superior numbers. The Kaiser had called them the "contemptible British Army." After Mons, the British proudly called themselves the "Old Contemptibles." But on August 24th the famous retreat from Mons began. Back went the British through Valenciennes. At Cambrai they made a fierce attempt to halt. But the French still retreated, and the British had to go too. They marched in retreat through many a town, back toward which they were to struggle for four weary, bloody years.

The Germans swept into northern France like a hurricane, rushing into and past Lille, Arras, Amiens, Rheims. Ever the French fell back, fighting where a battle was profitable, retreating where it was not. France was magnificent in trusting herself wholly to the army. In 1870 France lost her armies because the politicians demanded that certain cities be saved. But to Joffre cities were as nothing in time of war beside the army. Not even Paris would be defended at the expense of the army. Only the army could save France. So the French gave way, obeying the master mind.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MARNE, THE AISNE, AND YPRES.

The world stood aghast at the power of the victorious Germans. They seemed to have the war won at a blow. Every day saw them twenty or thirty miles farther into France. The roads were choked



with fugitive peasants fleeing from their homes. The French government left Paris. About this time news began to filter through of dreadful outrages in Belgium and France, of old men shot down, of thousands of girls and women violated, of the inhabitants of whole towns massacred. Germany was unheeding of the white flame of wrath in England, Belgium and France, but she was alarmed at the tide of indignation in neutral countries, and desperately attempted to disprove the atrocities where possible, and to justify them where she could not deny. German officials convinced certain well-known respected American correspondents that no outrages had been committed. The newspapers of America gave little credence at first to the reports. It was months before enough evidence leaked out to convince Americans of the dreadful happenings. Louvain, Termonde, Malines, Dinant, Aerschot, and thousands of individual misdeeds will dishonor the German name for generations.

The Germans had set the middle of September for their entry into Paris. The delay in Belgium disarranged the schedule, but the early days of September found them within a few miles of the French capital. The prize seemed certain of attainment. The city was not attacked at once, however; the German generals were trained soldiers, armies, not cities, were the objectives. Von Kluck, who commanded the German right wing, had defeated the British and also a French army and had driven them to the protection of the Paris forts. Believing himself safe from these for the present, he swerved to the southeast, marching past Paris and across the front of the troops in line there. His part in the campaign was to turn the flank of the French and force them eastward against the other German armies. But Joffre's successful retreat had now made this impossible, and Von Kluck modified his program to an

attempt to cut the French in two east of Paris, force one part into Paris and roll the other to the east.

Joffre had foreseen such a move. He was terribly short of men. The first mobilization had yielded only 800,000 men. The second draft of a half million was only then coming into line. From a part of these he formed a new army, the Ninth, and entrusted it to General Foch, placing him in what he believed would be the critical point. The Sixth army he left in Paris for the moment; he would have a use for it later. On September 5th he called upon the French to die where they stood rather than yield another mile. Then, if ever, the Germans must be stopped. All of France knew the critical time was come.

The conflict that followed has become known as the Battle of the Marne. From September 6th to 10th the armies grappled in a death struggle, with liberty and autocracy in the balance, the Germans fighting to complete their victory, that they might be back home by Christmas, laden with the spoils of cities; the French fighting for their homes, for the life of their beloved country, for the freedom of the world. The hills and valleys of France became the scene of warfare as bloody, of valor as sublime, as the world had ever seen. The French obeyed Joffre's command, they stood, they died, and they conquered.

On the second day of the battle, Joffre made his first use of the Paris army, throwing it onto the flank and rear of Von Kluck's forces. The attack was a total surprise to the enemy, who considered the French to be at their last gasp. The Germans gave way at first, but soon rallied. Von Kluck brought back enough of his troops to hold the new attack. And now Joffre set more armies in motion, the Fifth French army and the British force, which were next in line east of Paris. These troops pressed the enemy back all along their front. But this attack was not decisive;

Von Kluck still held his lines, was advancing elsewhere.

Next in line, besides the two French and the British armies, was the Ninth army of General Foch. He bore the brunt of the attack all through the German advance of the Marne. It was where he stood that the foe made his fiercest effort for final victory. The ground was littered with the fallen, there was no respite day nor night for the defenders. Regiments were ground to pieces under the terrific pressure. When one of his officers complained that the men were exhausted and would have to retreat, Foch replied "So are the Germans. Attack at once." To Joffre, in response to an appeal for an advance, he said "My right is broken, my left is retreating; I will advance with my center." The decisive moment came on the 9th. Foch's right wing was hard pressed. But the enemy overstepped himself, opened a gap in his line, and into his flank Foch threw a single division, the 42d, the only one he had to spare. But it was decisive. The result was the complete victory of the Marne. Von Kluck's supreme attempt had failed, now he was in peril on both flanks, and was compelled to retreat instantly. The other German armies west of Verdun had to follow or be outflanked. The war was decided on September 9, 1914, although the enemy continued to fight for more than four years, and seemed often to be approaching victory during that time. But he never came so near to triumph as at the first Battle of the Marne. Few, if any, of the decisive battles of the world's history were more simple. In this war, involving millions of soldiers, a single division, numbering a few thousand brave troops, directed by a master mind, was sufficient to decide the contest. Americans will ever be proud of their own 42d, the Rainbow division, but the French 42d will be ranked with the three hundred Spartans of Leonidas. In losing the Battle of the Marne the



Germans lost their great opportunity to win the war. They lost the initial advantage their preparations had given them, lost, for the time, strategic freedom. They had failed to overwhelm the French, and all their calculations had been based upon doing this. They had lost all chance of doing so at a single blow. And they still had to meet the Russian army, and had to face an evergrowing force of British and colonial troops.

Several traditions have grown out of the Battle of the Marne: one, the Foch tradition, which ascribes a more spectacular part to his army than the fearful pounding that actually occurred, a pounding that was not far from defeat, but was resisted until victory came; the other, the tradition of the Paris army, that was believed to have swept the Germans into rout. The victor of the Marne was Marshal Joffre. It was he that ordered the various moves that together brought the victory.

For several days the Germans retreated northward, the tired French pushing them hard. Back through Amiens the armies went, through Château-Thierry, which was not to see Germans again for nearly four years. Rheims was retaken, the German line west of Verdun swung as on a hinge, the far end falling back in haste to escape destruction. The French and English hoped to push the enemy entirely from France, but on the 14th, they found the foe entrenched along the heights north of the Aisne, apparently determined to make a stand. The struggle that followed was even fiercer than before; a victory was long in the balance. The Germans had prepared these entrenchments even while their armies were apparently marching to victory, and now their foresight enabled them to hold a great part of the French territory they had overrun. The armies were getting their first taste and the outside world its first news of trench warfare. For nine days the Battle of the Aisne was a continuous

struggle; after that period it flickered out, while major operations went on elsewhere.

Even while the Battle of the Marne was involving all the armies west of Verdun, the Germans were attacking to the southeast, as well. This latter phase of the conflict was not affected immediately by the great French victory at the Marne. Even while the Germans were making their great retreat to the Aisne they continued to attack and advance in the region beyond Verdun. Verdun itself was in danger, Belfort was attacked. The Kaiser was awaiting the hour to enter Nancy. The Germans were preparing to push home the attack of their armies in the St. Mihiel salient when Joffre came to the rescue. The relief came, not at the threatened spot, but at the other end of the battle line.

The Battle of the Aisne was fought with the flanks of both armies resting—not on the North sea, as was the case later and throughout the war—but on the Oise River near Noyon, south of St. Quentin. Failing to drive back the Germans by direct attack, Joffre now attempted to outflank them. This strategy very nearly succeeded. Von Kluck again saw some perilous moments. The Germans were compelled to abandon their attacks elsewhere and rush divisions to their sorely pressed flank. Then came a race to the sea. As fast as the French and English extended their lines, the Germans brought from somewhere troops to face them. Joffre continued to hold the advantage and he was able in a measure to control the direction of the front. The battle lines were thus formed in a line almost directly northward, whereas a westward trend would have left the Germans in control of the French coast opposite Britain. The race continued through the last days of September and the first half of October. Then, on October 15th, both armies extended their lines to the sea and to neither side was a flank attack possible.

There was scant respite for the wearied armies. On October 9th the Germans captured Antwerp. This, the second most strongly fortified city in the world, resisted only eleven days. The huge guns of the enemy soon had it at their mercy. The Belgian army and a detachment of British marines evacuated the city, thus abandoning virtually all of Belgium to the invader. The fall of Antwerp released several German corps, which were rushed to a new attack. Furious because they had failed to grasp the French channel ports while they were undefended, the German command now attempted to break through and capture Calais, their "window on the sea." Still confident of his army's ability to crash a way through, the Kaiser set an early date for his triumphant entry into Calais. The attack was launched about October 18th and was first directed against the Belgians, who held the line immediately adjoining the sea. The harassed Belgians fought valiantly. The Germans savagely. By sheer weight of numbers the enemy was making progress toward his goal, and on October 25th crossed the Yser River, the only natural line of defense. At this juncture, the British navy came to the rescue. The fighting being within effective range from the ocean, British monitors came up and poured a destructive fire into the German ranks. To protect themselves, the Germans shifted their attack further south, but on the 29th the Belgians flooded the country, again checking the exasperated Germans, who were compelled to retreat across the Yser. Once more the attack was shifted, and the French and Belgians, who held the lines at Dixmude, were assailed savagely, but without greater result to the enemy than the possession of part of the ruined town.

The British army had removed from its place along the battle front of the Aisne to a new position adjoining the Belgians. This put them nearer their bases at Boulogne and Havre. Numbering less than one hun-

dred thousand in the beginning, there were one hundred and seventy-five thousand soon after the Marne. Regiments had been hurried from all corners of the empire, and such as were seasoned troops went into the front lines almost at once. Besides the British, native battalions from India had arrived, the first of them landing in the south of France on September 25th. Altogether, it was quite a formidable British army that faced the Germans at the beginning of November.

It was against the British that the Germans next directed their attack, even while they continued to press the Belgians. The best German troops were now thrown into the fray. Day after day fresh regiments were sacrificed. There was a massing of artillery such as the war had not yet seen. There were the direct commands of the "all highest" and also the hatred of the Germans for the British, whom they blamed for their failure to win the war. Against the German onslaught the British opposed far inferior numbers. The difference in artillery was even greater. Against large caliber guns the British opposed small ones; against machine gun fire they opposed rifles, against scores of assaults they opposed cold steel and heroism. The attack centered around the ancient town of Ypres, where the British occupied a salient. Bloody "Wipers" became a byword in the British Empire.

During the long continuous battle, winter came upon the armies. Fighting often in water up to their waists, sleeping on frozen ground, enduring frost, sleet and snow, the armies fought on. But not all the massed guns and men of the Germans could win them a cleared road to Calais. In vain were the plans of war lords, the commands of generals, the bravery of German soldiers. After five weeks of terrific fighting the enemy had progressed scarcely a mile toward his goal. The battle died down to desultory fighting, to local raids. The campaign of 1914 was over.

The French on the right of the English shared in the defense of the channel ports. The fact that the general in command at this point was Foch was assurance that the Germans would be held.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.

Napoleon in exile declared that in one hundred years Europe would be either republican or Cossack. Neither side of his prediction was fulfilled in 1914. But the rise of the Russian Empire since Napoleon's time is one of the marvels of history. Numbering a few millions in the Middle Ages, not more than fifty millions a century ago, the Russian people had increased to one hundred and seventy millions in our day. The empire was pressing into the heart of Asia and spreading into western Europe. England had long feared Russia's designs on India, but in the last eight years had come to an understanding. Germany affected to be the champion of civilization against the oncoming "barbarous Slavs."

Russia had never been an industrial nation, but in recent years she was beginning to produce as well as to consume the products of modern commercialism. One thing Russia needed badly: a seaport. The Baltic ports were icebound in winter. Vladivostock was far away. There was only one seaport that Russia could hope to secure, and that one was the prize of the ages, a very bone of contention, Constantinople. She had fought two wars, during the nineteenth century, to secure the Golden Horn, and each time had been balked by the great powers.

Russia was highly civilized in one respect: her diplomatic activities. Her statesmen, ever restless, were always seeking an advantage, whether in Afghanistan, in China, or in the Balkans. She would



have been a congenial partner for Germany, had not their interests clashed so irretrievably. Russia considered herself the protector of the Balkans, having been the means of securing their freedom. Most of the Balkan peoples, except the Roumanians, were of Slav blood, and they looked to Russia to uphold them. So, whatever judgment may be passed upon Russian foreign policy in general, she was unquestionably right in her decision to stand by Serbia.

The world did not look for great military successes from Russia. Less than forty years had passed since she was barely able to defeat Turkey. Only ten years had gone by since she failed miserably in the war with Japan. But this latter war was to Russia what the Boer War was to Britain; it revealed the deficiencies of the army. The ten years succeeding were well spent, as events were to prove.

Russia had a peculiar frontier, as regards her two chief enemies, Austria-Hungary and Germany. Russian Poland was a large block of country thrust far into the region held by her foes. Germany occupied the land north and west, Austria occupied Galicia on the south. This section of Russia, therefore, inevitably the battle ground of a war, was bordered on three sides by the enemy. The first goal of a campaign would be the conquest of the north and south flanks, so as to give a short straight battle line, one end resting on the Baltic Sea, the other on the high Carpathian Mountains. Russian railroads, even in the thickly settled regions, were comparatively few. This was a disadvantage, not only in mobilization but also in subsequent campaigns. It was understood that Russia would attack as soon as possible, so as to relieve France. The German campaign was built upon the estimated delay of Russia in assembling her armies.

But Russia mobilized with remarkable swiftness. Fully two weeks before friend or foe believed it possible, she was in the field; the main armies attacked

the Galician front, while strong forces were marching into German territory in East Prussia. On the 17th of August, while German armies were still in upper Belgium, Russian armies were sweeping back the Germans along the Baltic. In this region are wide flat reaches dotted with marshes and lakes—the Masurian Lake region. The Germans at one time planned to drain this land, but a certain old general, Von Hindenburg, had intervened, insisting that the lakes would be of great value in case of war with Russia. He became known as a crank on the subject—but the lakes were not drained.

The Russians met with success at first. They penetrated far into East Prussia, sending a shock of fear even to Berlin. The German commander was instantly recalled and the old retired Von Hindenburg was pressed back into service. The veteran knew the region better than most persons know their own city. He asked for four army corps, which were rushed from the west front. Then, making use of the strategic railways, he fell upon the Russians at Tannenberg and Allenstein. He caught the Russians in a maze of swamps where they were practically lost, separated from guns and supports. The attack crumpled them up at once. The result of two days fighting was one of the most complete victories of the war; one hundred thousand Russians were killed and wounded, seventy thousand more were captured; one whole army was destroyed. The victory, coming during the great advance into France, was received with wild joy by the German people. Von Hindenburg became the national hero, was made a field marshal. The success in the east enabled the government to smooth over the subsequent defeat at the Marne. It is possible, indeed, that the French won at the Marne because the Germans were compelled to shift large bodies of troops to meet the Russian advance. The four corps that were sent to Von Hindenburg might



have given a different ending to the Marne had they remained in France.

Meanwhile, Russia met with far greater success against the Austrians in the south. An offensive by the foe was nipped in the bud, and then the Russians attacked all along the Galician front. The armies of the dual monarchy were swept back as easily as the Russians had been in the north. The Russians survived the defeat of Tannenberg the more easily because they were able to announce such stupendous movements and magnificent victories over the Austrians. The chief asset of the Russians was their numbers. The terrible defeats they suffered would have been fatal to a lesser nation, but they only caused Russia to withdraw on that particular front while she swept on elsewhere. By the end of August one and one-half million Russians were attacking the Austrians. On September 1st they took the city of Lemberg, causing a loss to the Austrians of one hundred and thirty thousand men. On September 17th they invested the important city of Przemyśl; four days later, another fortress, Jaroslav, was carried by storm. The Russians pressed rapidly on, and by October 1st were approaching the western limits of Galicia and were swarming over the passes of the Carpathians. The military strength of Austria-Hungary was threatened with destruction before the war was three months old. Complete defeat seemed inevitable. Germany was compelled to make still further exertions to save her ally, and German armies, German railways and German generalship came to the rescue. Von Hindenburg launched his second blow.

He had first to defeat a second attempt to invade East Prussia, which he did about October 10th. Then, while the Austrians were spurred to renewed exertions, Von Hindenburg suddenly attacked in the center, driving through the Russian armies. The Russians were compelled to make a general retreat, abandoning

the siege of Przemyśl. On October 21st the Germans were only seven miles from Warsaw, and Berlin prepared to celebrate.

But the Russians had a real commander, the Grand Duke Nicholas, who knew how to attack as well as to retreat. He had new armies ready and threw a force directly on the flank of the advancing Germans and forced them back nearly to the frontier. Quickly reforming his armies he made new attacks against the enemy's weakest place, the Austrian front, and once more swept all before him. By November 12th the Russians were once more investing the unfortunate city of Przemyśl, were progressing far to the west of it and were advancing once more in the north.

And now German generalship and German railways clashed to the death with Russian numbers. The conflict had not yet settled into the stationary trench warfare. There were wide movements of troops and space for strategy. Von Hindenburg's new attempt was to do what every general longs to accomplish, to surround an enemy army. The battle line at Lodz, southwest of Warsaw, was strongly held by both sides. The Germans attacked there, and while doing so another army that had been gathered by means of the many railways was brought down from the north onto the flank and rear of the Russians. An immense capture was in prospect and the German capital eagerly awaited the final news. The Russians resisted desperately, the Germans attacked ferociously. The Grand Duke Nicholas, however, had still more reserves, and a strong force of these were thrown against the rear of the enemy army that had slipped around the Russians at Lodz. The Grand Duke had performed a feat perhaps new to strategy: he had enveloped the enveloping army. The four distinct forces resembled a double sandwich. The fight that followed this situation is described as the most horrible of the many battles of the war, where foes clinched to the

death and gave no quarter. The German army was now itself in danger of destruction, but it literally hacked itself out of the trap with a loss of nearly half the force. Only the wreck of an army escaped. Von Hindenburg nearly lost his laurels in the Battle of Lodz.

The result of this battle was the defeat of the German hopes of relieving the Austrians, since it did not compel the Russians to retreat from Galicia. Another result was that, for the first time, a continuous front from the Baltic to the Carpathians was formed, and the armies dug themselves in.

The situation was indeed serious to the Central Powers. Russian numbers, generalship, equipment had proved far more effective than had been dreamed. But the Germans made a supreme effort to save the Austrians from collapse. Attacking this time in Galicia, they were successful in defeating the Russians as they were about to besiege Cracow. The defeat forced the Slavs back fifty-five miles, but it did not shake their hold on Przemysl, which they continued to invest through the winter and until March 22d, when it surrendered.

The Russian campaign continued through the winter, a mild season making movements possible. For the fourth time in five months a Russian army penetrated East Prussia, only to meet with the same fate as before. In Eastern Galicia and in Bukowina they suffered reverses and some loss of occupied territory. But there were no major battles during these months.

Austrian forces had promptly invaded Serbia at the outbreak of war. Belgrade, across the Danube from Austria, was bombarded and occupied. A rash attempt to advance met with defeat at the hands of the Serbs. There were other engagements, with varying fortunes. Then, early in December, the Serbs inflicted a severe defeat upon the Austrians, taking

many prisoners and actually driving them out of the country; even Belgrade was evacuated.

Turkey came into the war in October. In recent years Turkey had come under the influence of Germany. German officers trained the new Turkish army. Germany obtained concessions to build the great railway, the Bagdad line. High officials were bought by German gold, were ready to do Germany's bidding. The Kaiser had posed as a friend of the Mohammedans; by the Turkish populace he was considered a convert.

When the Great War began, Turkey waited to see which way the wind blew. Two German warships, in the Mediterranean at the outbreak of war, escaped through the Dardanelles and made certain the entry of Turkey. So when German armies seemed to be sweeping the enemy from the map, Turkey began war by bombarding a Russian port in the Black Sea. Mutual declarations of war followed.

Turkey was a vital factor in Germany's plans of conquest. It would be Turkish armies, led by Germans, that should seize the Suez Canal and drive the British from Egypt, and should also drive the Russians north of the Caucasus Mountains. This latter campaign was undertaken first; a large Turkish army penetrated far into the mountain wilds. This army met prompt disaster, an entire corps being captured or destroyed. It was not until December that British aeroplanes descried the approach to the Suez Canal of a Turkish army. But there was no clash of moment until the following year.

## CHAPTER VI.

MILITARY AND NAVAL STATIONS DURING THE  
FIRST WINTER.

The actual fighting on the western front during the winter was of minor character. After the failure of the Germans to break through to Calais, no extensive campaigns were undertaken. But local fighting, often of the fiercest nature, was constant. A division commander coveted an enemy trench, or a regiment craved revenge for losses; a mile or so of the line was under enfilade from a dominating hill, the capture of which was attempted; raids were made for prisoners and information; all these kept the battle lines active and swelled the casualty lists. A few severe battles occurred during January. The French attacked in Alsace, gaining considerable ground. About the same time a promising attack by Joffre's troops along the Aisne was frustrated by a flood.

All the combatants waited for spring. It was believed that other nations would join the alliance against the Central Powers. Italy was one of these. After the outbreak of war, Italy terminated her alliance with Germany and Austria, and had since been preparing to ally herself with France and England. Bulgaria, Roumania, and Greece also were thought to be on the point of entering the contest against Germany. These were the chief reasons for the hopes entertained by the Allies of defeating Germany during 1915.

Both sides saw in the situation promise of victory, and both sides had apparent reason for this belief. On the face of it, the decision was still to be made; the Battle of the Marne was too recent to be seen in perspective and it was not then regarded as the decisive victory. The Allied nations and the United States believed the defeat of Germany to be inevitable.



But the German people did not so see it. The German army boasted of great victories. Their lines were held fast in enemy territory. The whole nation was united under trained leadership and every man was performing some specific task. With so great and powerful a nation united, all with a will to victory, ultimate triumph, to the German people, seemed as certain as day and night. The coming campaign promised to fulfill the great dream, promised to give complete victory, delayed, but none the less sweet.

The German leaders may not have shared the optimism that undoubtedly inspired the nation as a whole. They had certain problems to solve: the plan to win the war in a few weeks had failed; neither France nor Russia had been beaten down. And England was coming on. England and Russia constituted the two chief problems. England, it was recognized, would now bend every energy to defeat Germany. To hearten their people, the German government created the belief that they were fighting for self-preservation against a deliberate attempt of England and Russia to destroy their nation. And the Germans for three years fought on in this belief.

But England was not ready. Germany's hope of victory still lay in the possibility of destroying either France or Russia before British millions should arrive on the battle line. There is no question but that, to the Kaiser and his aides, the situation was serious. But they had stupendous visible results from the first campaign, results so brilliant that they blinded the people to the fact that they were not the prizes for which the conflict was begun. Germany had captured nearly six hundred thousand enemy soldiers; more than half were Russians, two hundred and twenty thousand were French. There were British prisoners to a number equal to the army England had maintained in America during the Revolution. Belgian prisoners numbered nearly forty thousand. The fu-



ture of Germany seemed assured. The check they had suffered was minimized and served only to increase their efforts.

To France the situation was somber. She had lost heavily during the opening campaign, a large part of the flower of her army had been swallowed up. The list of casualties filled nearly every home with mourning. The utmost bravery of her troops and all the skill of her generals had achieved only a check of the enemy; he had not been driven off her soil.

France had done her utmost almost from the first. Her affairs were so ordered that the full military strength was in the field in a few weeks. Two million men were in battle lines, with enough of a reserve to maintain that strength. Every shop and factory, every trade and calling, nearly every profession, had been drained at once of all the eligible men. France could not at any future time increase her strength, could only face, instead, a gradual weakening, slow but certain. France had not the colonies, as England had, to supply first-class soldiers; although more than three hundred thousand came later from her North African possessions, a majority of whom were used elsewhere than in the front-line trenches. The task of France was to hold fast until England should be able to throw at least a million soldiers into line.

The greatest asset of France was her large number, many thousands, of highly trained officers. Germany had no advantage in this respect; if anything, the French, from lieutenant to general, had better training; certainly they showed greater military genius. The British were handicapped seriously throughout the war by the scarcity of efficient officers. The French staff never failed at any critical moment. It was an important factor in the war.

England was buckling to her great task. A large number of Britons still thought that a short campaign in 1915 would win the war, but the wiser and better

informed foresaw a long struggle with the end somewhere in the dim future. Lord Kitchener declared the war would last three years at least; which, in view of the terrible casualties and the enormous cost, seemed to most men impossible. He also said the war would begin in May, 1915; meaning that the new British army would then be ready to enter the fight. England's professional army, none better in the world, was thrown as a whole into the conflict in August and September, 1914, and it had been largely consumed at Mons, at the Marne, the Aisne, and Ypres. By February 1st there were one hundred and four thousand casualties, or a larger number than composed the first British army in Belgium. Drafts from India and the other colonies were sufficient only to maintain a strength of one hundred and fifty thousand or more.

But England planned a far greater force than that. Kitchener called for two million men. One million and a quarter were in camp by winter, undergoing a severe course of training that would fit them for the trenches by spring. The colonies were making equal efforts. A little more than two months after the war began, the first Canadian soldiers landed in England. This first contingent of thirty thousand men were convoyed safely across the Atlantic. By winter, more than one hundred thousand Canadians were in training, at home and abroad. Australian plans and results were commensurate with her population and heritage. South Africa undertook to handle England's affairs on that continent, including the conquest of two large German colonies and the suppression of a Boer rebellion. Truly, the Germans were facing still another miscalculation. They had held that England's colonies neither could nor would aid her in war.

But though Britain's military strength was undeveloped, her other arm was at full strength and in instant readiness. The British navy and the French army beat the Germans. Many other factors were needed

to complete the task, but these two were vital. And of the two, the British navy was the more important. With it, England alone could have fought the Germans even as she fought Napoleon.

During the early months, the navy was seldom mentioned in the news except when it suffered losses. Its silent work was by the outside world lost sight of in the more dazzling display of millions of soldiers marching and fighting. But, in a moment, almost, the navy performed the one task that ultimately defeated Germany; it closed the seas to the enemy. Germany had a navy only second in strength, but it was doomed to remain in hiding or else to come out to certain destruction. When war began, every German merchant ship that did not gain a home or a neutral port was captured by the British navy. In a few weeks there were six hundred and forty-five German ships in neutral ports all over the world. Hundreds were captured. Germany's foreign commerce disappeared from the waters of the globe by reason of the might of the British navy.

The other side of the navy's appointed task was performed equally well. The supplies of the whole world, outside of enemy countries, were kept available to England and her Allies. Their foreign commerce continued with only such interruption as was unavoidable. The United States could not have sold a dollar's worth of goods to Europe, but for the English navy. The immensity of the supplies sent overseas is only hinted at in the single fact of Canada's contribution of sixty million shells, and twenty-five hundred aeroplanes. And Canada was not a manufacturing country. Such incidentals as barbed wire was bought by the millions of dollars worth from the United States, while horses, mules, provisions, motors and other necessities amounted to the hundreds of millions, and while there were some losses by submarines, most of this material reached its destination safely.

But for her navy, England could not have availed herself of the military aid—more than a million soldiers ultimately—of her colonies. How well the navy looked after this end of its work is shown by the fact that, of twenty-two million soldiers convoyed from the various fronts, only four thousand three hundred and ninety-one were lost at sea. During the first year of the war British warships convoyed sixty troopships from Australia, fifty from India, and forty from Canada.

Britain kept guard on the sea lanes of the world only at a great cost, both of ships and lives. The Germans had one weapon with which they could strike unseen at the proud strength of the British navy, a weapon which they believed would ultimately destroy it. The war was not many days old before submarines were sinking an occasional patrol boat. Then, on September 22d, one U-boat sank three British cruisers, causing a loss of 1,450 men. In October, the *Audacious*, a modern dreadnaught, was sunk, and on New Year's Day, the *Formidable*, with a loss of six hundred men, was sunk in the English Channel. The sensation caused by these and other sea losses was far greater than was caused by any similar loss on land. In the eyes of the world it implied unknown but tremendous eventualities; affecting greatly, or perhaps destroying, British naval supremacy, and suggesting the end of the empire and the doom of the battleship. The German people magnified these incidents into decisive victories. But the grip of Britain was not loosened by these losses, nor would it have been weakened had five times as many ships been sunk.

The navy settled itself into the work that was to continue for years, of a long distance blockade, ever watchful for the coming out of the German fleet. But it was not all passive service. On August 24th a British squadron raided Heligoland and sank several German warships. On November 1st, on the far off



coast of Chili, three old British vessels were sunk by the only German fleet on the high seas. Once more the world was agog over the possibility of Britain's defeat. But the German triumph was short-lived. A fleet of swift cruisers under Admiral Sturdee was dispatched from English waters and on December 8th, near the Falkland Islands, the German fleet was destroyed, only one ship, the *Dresden*, escaping for the moment.

The Germans, maddened at losing access to the sea, left no means untried to inflict damage upon England. In December, a squadron slipped through the mists of the North Sea and bombarded three towns on the east coast of England, killing a number of civilians. A second raid was made soon afterward, the attacking vessels again eluding the British patrol. But the Germans lacked strategy. They made a third attempt in the same region and were intercepted by the British battle cruisers of Admiral Beatty. In this, the first naval battle between modern ships of equal fighting power at a range up to eight miles, the Germans lost one of their finest cruisers, the *Blücher*. Others of their vessels were damaged. The British lost no vessels and suffered few casualties. The Germans risked no more of their first-class ships in their future raids on the English coast.

The net result of the ocean warfare to the end of winter was that England lost sixteen warships and Germany twenty; very small vessels not counted. In February, the Germans declared a submarine blockade of the British Isles and the British navy found its task doubled.

The smaller German colonies had fallen without resistance to the English navy. Australia's navy was largely instrumental in the conquest of the German island possessions in the Pacific; and it was an Australian cruiser that terminated the destructive career of Germany's most famous raider, the *Emden*.

The United States felt a touch of the reality of war during the first winter. Widespread industrial depression, together with a great increase in the price of the necessities of life, brought some of the hardship of war without any of its glory. A closer touch was gained in the relief work undertaken in the war-ravaged countries, particularly in Belgium. Large sums of money were raised, food and clothing were sent to the homeless and hungry ones. England and France, however, supplied the great bulk of the relief.

American opinion and sympathy had, at the beginning of war, instinctively aligned itself on the side of England and France. The German-Americans naturally were favorably inclined to their mother country, but most others hoped to see Germany beaten. The destruction and pillage in France and Belgium confirmed American hostility to the vandals.

Belgium and northern France were indeed in sad plight. In the grip of a ruthless conqueror, they were reduced from ease and plenty to the lowest essentials of life, scanty food and wretched shelter. The enormous number of three hundred and fifty thousand homes were destroyed in northern France alone. All the valuable machinery of the occupied sections of both countries was appropriated by the Germans, who systematically removed everything of industrial value to their own country. In addition to ravaging, the Germans levied tribute upon the French and Belgians; collecting, by persuasion and force, the cost of occupation. The Belgian people remaining in their homes paid in cash eight to twelve million dollars monthly throughout the war.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE WEST FRONT IN 1915.

During the first half of 1915 the French held by far the greatest part of the battle line, five hundred and forty-four miles, whereas the British held only thirty-one, and the Belgians seventeen miles. This length of line, occupied by opposing forces, with men a few feet or yards apart and men in reserve, reveals the magnitude of this war contrasted with all other conflicts. The newly recruited British troops began to arrive behind the lines late in the winter, to receive their final training within sound of the guns. But these new forces could as yet be organized only as battalions and brigades, not as armies or even corps, since hardly a man of them had had any previous training.

The opening gun of the new campaign season was fired by the French in the Champagne region where they made an attack in February. It resulted only in casualties and prisoners. During the same month the Germans advanced about four miles on a thirteen-mile front in the Vosges Mountains. On March 9th the British took their first step toward Germany. In a sudden attack, centering in the village of Neuve Chapelle, they crashed forward about a mile on a front a little less than four miles long. The attack was preceded by thirty-five minutes of intense artillery fire, during which time the British used nearly as much ammunition as during the whole Boer War. The hurricane fire pulverized the enemy trenches and partly destroyed the barbed wire defenses. The advance of the infantry was gallantly made and the first line of German trenches occupied. There the success ended. Through poor staff work, proper supports were not given, guns were not brought up, and while

the British clung to the captured ground, it was at high cost. More than thirteen thousand casualties was the price of the few square miles gained. The attack was on too small a scale to produce any definite results. The British were jubilant, however, over the success of their new artillery. The trenches were only one hundred yards apart in places, yet guns four miles behind the lines accurately deluged the enemy's front trenches. Part of the artillery in action was French.

There was a general belief at this time in Germany's military weakness. The prophets foresaw a steady decline of strength, the result of which would be a collapse somewhere on the long front in Belgium or France. The million and more German casualties had drained the reserves, it was thought, and the downfall was imminent. The real truth of the whole German nation in arms, of almost inexhaustible numbers, had not yet penetrated the Anglo-French mind. It needed another campaign to awaken England to the immensity of the task.

Meanwhile, the Entente forces were gathering strength; sixty thousand Canadians were across the Atlantic, half of whom had just moved into the battle trenches. On April 21st, it was announced that seven hundred and fifty thousand British troops were in France. Britain enjoyed the peace of mind of duty performed, a state of bliss that was short-lived; for on the following day, a great German storm beat upon the Allied lines, imperiling the entire northern wing. The Germans had again done the unexpected; they had attacked when it was assumed that they would not be able to maintain a successful defensive.

The second Battle of Ypres was as perilous to the British and French as the first had been; indeed, their lines were actually broken, but the Germans failed to profit by it. The British still occupied a salient at Ypres, although the attack of the previous autumn

had pushed them back somewhat. The Canadians held the right flank of the British lines; next to them was a corps of French Colonial troops. On the morning of April 22d these African troops peered over the tops of their trenches, watching curiously a yellowish-white vapor that came drifting with the breeze from the German lines. The cloud came nearer, harmless in appearance, but when the first whiffs of it drifted across the French lines, men gasped in sudden agony, clutched their throats, fell in contortions or died where they stood. It was the inauguration of poison gas.

The use of gas was forbidden by an agreement entered into by the nations of Europe and America. The adoption of it by the Germans was nothing less than a tremendous ghastly crime, staining the honor of the German army, degrading the soul of German science. Adopted for the purpose of gaining an important military success by means of the surprise and consequent confusion it would cause, it is the great irony of the war that the Germans gained no advantage from it. That they did not succeed is due to British and Canadian valor.

When the nature of the cloud was understood by the French colonial troops, they were utterly routed; those that were not suffocated or taken prisoner fled in disorder and could not be rallied that day. This left a five mile gap in which there were no troops whatever to oppose a German advance. The Canadians were left with their flank in the air, in danger of an attack from three sides. These soldiers from overseas had never before faced the enemy, yet they did not falter. The gas had not been heavy enough on their front to cause many casualties, but they had a taste of what it meant and they were fired with a battle rage such as a year of campaigning could not have produced. The actions of the Canadians on the first day were a marvel of strategy and bravery. Instead of retreating, which would have saved their force,

but would also have opened the way to Ypres and perhaps to Calais, they held their ground, extended their lines to close as much of the gap as possible, and actually advanced in places. The very audacity of it convinced the Germans that the Canadians had strong reinforcements behind them, and they failed to pour through the open gap their gas had made. But the Canadians had no reserve. Notwithstanding all the hundreds of thousands of British troops in France, there were no reserves immediately available. The Canadians held their thinning lines throughout the day, while the commanders frantically strove to collect enough soldiers to fill the gap. During the night the English line was withdrawn about a mile. The following day, the Germans pressed their attack, now conscious of the situation. But a line of troops had been thrown across the open doorway, and although they made repeated assaults in great force, the Germans could not break through. The rifles of the Canadians almost alone opposed the enemy, but they were enough. Again the bluff of the previous day was made, the British line advancing slightly when there were scarcely enough troops to make a continuous line.

On the third day of the battle the Canadians had to face the full strength of a gas cloud, but they held on, many dying where they stood, others rendered incapable of further fighting. The Canadians were withdrawn from the front lines on this day and British divisions took their place. They had suffered heavily by reason of their courage; of the thirty thousand Canadians in France, fully a fourth were killed or wounded in the three days' fighting.

The intensity of the battle continued for five days, while desultory attack continued for a month longer. The Germans were unwilling to confess defeat. They made a great gas attack on May 5th and a supreme assault on May 24th. But the British and French

had learned to meet the new conditions and they held the enemy. The net results of the great battle were that the Germans advanced two more miles on the road to Ypres and took several thousand French Colonial prisoners, also about sixteen hundred British and Canadian captives. The estimated casualties for friend and foe were one hundred thousand.

To the British public, these two battles were an awakening to the fact that all was not going well. There came stories of insufficient ammunition, of the need to save shells for weeks and months in order that enough reserves be accumulated for a single battle; stories also that told of the forced use of ineffective shrapnel where "high explosives" were needed. The clamor of the newspapers, especially Northcliffe's journals, resulted in a shake-up of the powers responsible. Lloyd George became director of munitions, taking that much of the burden from the shoulders of Lord Kitchener, and his measures in time removed the cause for complaint, although months were to pass before the British could match the Germans gun for gun.

Ammunition from overseas was just beginning to arrive, and the German papers proclaimed the "killing of their soldiers by American bullets." On May 7th, a submarine sank the giant steamer, *Lusitania*, reported to be laden with munitions from America. In addition to the uproar caused by the death of more than one hundred Americans, besides the thousand and more other noncombatants, the question of war supplies from the United States was widely discussed. The Germans exerted every public and secret agency to stop the flow of American shells and guns to European battlefields. Their campaigns for this purpose were far-reaching. Under the guise of a neutrality league, they attempted to enlist the humanitarian sentiment of the American people in a movement to stop the export of war supplies. These



petitions went to every corner of the United States, were found in the farm homes of Maine, Texas, and Oregon. Germany was not without apologists and defenders in the United States, who, not successful in regaining for her the friendship of America, were able to stir up more or less hostility toward Britain, a feeling Britain herself made possible by the search of mails and seizure of cargoes. But not all their "humane" appeals, nor the frenzy of pro-German papers, nor the ethics of pacifists, sufficed to halt the sale of munitions.

There was little fighting of importance during the summer. About the same time as the Battle of Ypres, the French made a great attempt to cut off the St. Mihiel salient, which was a menace to Verdun. But the Germans were too well entrenched, too well supplied with men and munitions, to be dislodged by the means the French at that date could command. The taking of the St. Mihiel salient had to wait for another day more than three years later. In May, Foch made an attack near Arras. He was supported by British troops, but the ammunition of the latter became exhausted and the attack came to nothing. Later in the same month, the British carried two miles of trenches at La Bassée. In June, they repelled a strong attack at Hooze, in the Ypres region, where the Germans were on the ridge and the British in the lowlands. From June 20th to July 15th, the German Crown Prince made heavy assaults on the Argonne front, taking some prisoners and territory, but achieving nothing of importance. The city and cathedral of Rheims were shelled intermittently, and ruins were made more desolate. All through the summer months, when the Russians were being battered by the combined strength of Germany and Austria, the Allies on the western front, were, for lack of ammunition for the heavy guns, practically inactive. The fighting had demonstrated that the Germans could not be beaten



without a tremendous expenditure of men and shells. The shells were as vital as the men; and attack unaided by artillery resulted only in the sacrifice of soldiers.

In September, the time arrived when the British and French felt themselves strong enough in resources to undertake the most ambitious campaign since the deadlock began. The great attack was made in two places: In Champagne, east of Rheims, the French alone assaulted; in the north, where the British line joined that of the French, joint attack was made. The British campaign is known as the Battle of Loos, from a town in the scope of the action. It is a tale of great hopes and of disappointment.

The aim of Sir John French and General Foch, who were in command of their respective forces, was to break the German line and advance at least to the city of Lens, the center of the richest coal fields of France. The British developed to a greater degree the method used at Neuve Chapelle, that of intense artillery preparation. Instead of a half hour of bombardment, as at the former battle, the British guns were worked day and night for four days before the attack. With explosions of shells resembling the rapid beating of a drum, with an intensity of fire such as the war had not yet seen, the assailants and the defenders awaited the hour. On the morning of September 25th, the bombardment halting on the instant, the British and French left their trenches. As in many other battles, the first advance was easily made; trenches had been destroyed, barbed wire cut. The troops swept on past the limit set for them. Only in the north the advance was held up by uncut wire, and this left the successful units subject to a deadly fire from their flank. A force of Scottish troops pressed on in spite of losses, and actually won their way through the last system of trenches. There they clung for a day and a night; strong reinforcements

might have cut the line and gained a big victory, but no reinforcements at all went to the aid of the Scots. Once more the bravery of British soldiers was set at naught by the incapacity of British high command.

The new British troops, "the first hundred thousand," were first used in this battle, and they abundantly proved their worth. But the British staff had not yet found itself, had not fused with its task. To offset a loss of fifty thousand men, a huge loss, when it is considered that only seventy thousand took part in the first advance, there were only nominal gains, a few lines of demolished trenches, a few thousand prisoners. The greatest benefit to the British were the lessons they learned, and these lessons were put to good use.

General Foch's troops, attacking simultaneously, won a part of Vimy Ridge, which was to be lost and retaken in other battles. They could not safely advance beyond the British, lest their flank be exposed, and the opportunity to capture Lens was lost.

Meanwhile the French had been more successful in their Champagne attack, also made on the same day. Twenty-five thousand prisoners and an advance of a few miles rewarded their efforts. On this, as on most other occasions on the west front, the only gains of consequence were won during the first day of attack. Thereafter it was a continuous struggle of attack, counter attack and defense, in which both sides lost heavily without gaining anything of value.

The several assaults made on the German lines during the year proved that the Allies had not yet solved the problem of breaking them. On each occasion the advance had been almost instantly checked after the first rush, and the effort to push on only sacrificed troops uselessly. From this fact, the opinion grew and became widespread that neither side could break through the other's defense, that the war would continue in deadlock and end likewise. The time came

when the Germans adopted this notion for their own purposes.

But the Entente Allies were not willing to concede defeat. Joffre spoke of his policy as one of nibbling. The British talked of the "Big Push" that was to come. Certainly, in the bravery and dash of the British volunteers there was hope of greater success when artillery, munitions and leadership should attain as high a standard; while on the French side there was readiness to undertake a general offensive whenever an opportunity and coöperation would be offered.

The only noteworthy events during the rest of the year were the retirement of Sir John French from the British command, and the accession of Sir Douglas Haig, who had commanded one of the two first corps landing in France at the beginning of the war; and the constant growth of the British and colonial forces. By the end of the year, there were one hundred and twenty thousand Canadians in England and France. In the autumn the British took over more of the battle line, increasing their front from thirty-one to fifty miles. About this time, also, the native Indian troops were withdrawn, and Europe saw them no more.

Christmas, 1915, found the armies on practically the same lines as they had occupied the previous holidays; a few rods or a mile advance here, a mile or so lost there.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RUSSIAN DEFEAT.

Of all the problems facing Germany and Austria-Hungary at the beginning of 1915, that of Russia was the most pressing. There was absolute certainty that Austria could not endure such another campaign as that of the previous autumn, when she was ever on the brink of complete disaster, when prisoners and casualties mounted by the hundred thousand. Not even

Germany could contemplate without dread another series of battles such as she had fought on the Russian front, when the Slav armies were no sooner driven back at one place than they advanced elsewhere. There was the utmost need for a sweeping victory over the Russians, a victory that should put Russia out of the war, if possible, or, at the very least, defeat her so decisively that Austria would no longer be in danger.

Russia quickly made it evident that she would again push the fighting. In February her armies once more raided East Prussia, only to lose almost fifty thousand prisoners. Then in March, after the fall of Przemyśl, she made a general advance in Galicia, more than making up her losses in the north; seventy thousand Austrians, in addition to the large garrison of Przemyśl, were taken prisoners. Once more the Russians were reaching for the passes of the Carpathians, as a step toward the plains of Hungary.

If the Germans were faced by the necessity of defeating Russia, there was also the belief, almost the assurance, that it was possible of accomplishment. There was no real hope of such a feat against the enemies on the west, but conditions in the east were different. The battles of the previous year had demonstrated that the Germans could mobilize quickly and secretly against any point on the Russian front, and that under these conditions they could break through and advance before the Russians, with their lack of railways, could bring up reserves. Railways, thus far, had beaten numbers. The German attacks of the previous year had lacked the decisive blow; they had made no fewer than seven general advances in 1914, but each time the Russians rebounded.

To the Germans the problem was plain, and there remained only to find the means to cope with it. All through the winter and early spring there were earnest consultations among the general staff, first to decide



on a plan, then to gather the means to carry it out. Thousands of officers from field marshals to lieutenants busied themselves with their share of the gigantic preparations; more guns had to be provided, great stores of ammunition set aside, troops had to be assembled, and each unit assigned to a definite place in the campaign. The German high command was profiting by its mistakes of the previous year; it was determined to make but one more Russian campaign, and to make that one decisive.

A vital part of the German preparations was going on behind the Russian lines. Hundreds of spies were at work hampering the military efforts of the foe; ammunition factories were blown up, transportation was demoralized; practically every army movement was known to the German command.

The month of May, 1915, was a month of spectacular events. It saw the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the entry of Italy into the war, and the beginning of Russian downfall. On May 2d the Germans began their campaign. A commander hitherto unknown to the public, General Mackensen, was in command of a mighty force of Germans and Austrians. Selecting a comparatively narrow front on the Donajec River in Western Galicia, he concentrated five thousand cannon and thousands of machine guns and literally blew a section of the Russian lines into oblivion. Into this gap poured the Teutonic armies that had been carefully trained for just these tactics. The rest of the campaign was a logical sequence of this break. The Germans rolled up the enemy; the Russians were unable to close the gap. Rivers were no obstacles to the invaders, and all resistance was brushed aside. The Grand Duke Nicholas at once began to withdraw his armies, particularly the ones high in the Carpathian passes. These were in the greatest danger, since the rapid advance of the Germans threatened to cut off their retreat. In six days, Hungary was cleared of



Russians, who made good their escape. But so rapid was the German advance that in twelve days they had recaptured the important city of Jaroslav, and had advanced to the banks of the San River, which forms a natural barrier in middle Galicia and Poland.

Now ensued the decisive battle of the campaign. If the Russians could hold the river between them and the foe, they would retain a great part of their conquest. But if they were forced back from the river, all their valor and sacrifice would be in vain, as far as territory was concerned. To this critical place came the Kaiser himself to inspire his soldiers to fight for empire. The crossing was forced on May 18th, the German commanders spared neither soldiers nor energy in vital moments. All Russian resistance was beaten down; the spy had done his work only too well. Thousands of Russian soldiers were without guns or ammunition, many waited for comrades to fall that they might use their rifles. Lacking powder, they fought with clubbed rifles or with bayonets.

On past the San swept the Teutons. On June 2d, thirty days from the beginning of the drive, Przemyśl was retaken; the Russians had lost the prize they fought for during six months and had only just succeeded in winning. On June 22d, the city of Lemberg also was recaptured. This marks the close, practically, of Mackensen's phase of the campaign. The Russians now made their line good, and so quick was their recovery from the disaster that General Brusiloff began to attack again before many weeks had passed. But the Russians had suffered a terrible defeat. They had lost men and munitions to such an extent that they could not hope to wage an offensive campaign during the remainder of that year. The loss in prisoners was tremendous; the Germans claimed to have captured more than one hundred thousand for the first half of June, alone.

After their great defeat, the Russian line ran south-

ward along a line drawn some miles west of Warsaw down to the border of Galicia, where it curved far to the east, having been forced back by Mackensen's drive. The second phase of the year's campaign was not long in beginning. This time it was Hindenburg who directed operations, and his attacks, as well planned and prepared as Mackensen's, were directed against the northern section of the front that had not been affected by the Galician defeat. The German operations contrast strongly with the British attacks during the same year and emphasize the tremendous advantage gained by the Central Powers from their years of preparation. Instead of assaults on a front of a few miles at intervals of months, such as the British were confined to, the Germans carried on a continuous campaign for six months, never lacking the necessary guns and shells.

On July 14th Hindenburg began his attack. His first problem was to drive the Russians across the Vistula at the points where they were west of the river—not a difficult task; and following this to cross the river in the face of the enemy's defenses. All along the line the Germans assaulted, while at six vital points strong spearheads of troops were thrown against the foe. The attack was successful at once. In a very few days the Russians were behind the Vistula everywhere except in front of Warsaw. After two weeks the Germans began to force passages of the river both north and south of Warsaw. This constituted a dangerous threat against the Russian armies in the Warsaw region. Before the Grand Duke decided to evacuate Warsaw, the enemy had strong forces across the river and was moving forward to envelop any troops that remained in the net. The Russians were reluctant to leave Warsaw. To abandon it would be a heavier blow at their prestige than all their defeats thus far. It meant the losing of all Poland. From a strictly military point of view,

the most serious result of the capture of Warsaw by the enemy was the loss of the railroads centering there. All railroads met at Warsaw; there was no other junction place for hundreds of miles and no north and south line along which troops might be moved. To transfer an army corps from north to south under these conditions, it would have to march or else be carried by train many miles eastward to a junction point, then westward again.

But there was a choice between evacuating Warsaw or of losing the armies defending it. The strong fortress of Ivangorod to the south had fallen; the Germans had crossed the river above and surrounded it. The same fate had befallen the other fortified river cities. So, on August 4th, when the world thought it was too late for the Russians to retreat successfully, Warsaw was evacuated. By dint of hard fighting they made good their escape, after the Germans had practically proclaimed their capture. The first phase of Hindenburg's campaign was over; it had resulted in a great success, even though the main Russian armies had escaped.

The second phase was not long in beginning. Less than two weeks after the capture of Warsaw, the Germans began their assault on the second Russian line. This line was far to the east of the Vistula, and was based on several strongly fortified cities, among them, Kovon and Brest-Litovsk. In less than ten days more, the Germans had occupied the entire system of defenses; the Russians seemed to be unable to hold any line whatever. In Galicia, Mackensen had resumed his advance and was pushing back the Russians, and keeping step with Hindenburg.

In losing their second line, the Russians lost their last natural or prepared barrier to the enemy's advance. They were thrown back into the wide flat regions of Courland, into the great marshes of Pinsk. And at last, in September, they came to a halt in a general

line running south from Riga, a line that barely touched Eastern Galicia. The Germans followed, capturing the cities of Grodno and Vilna on the way.

The Russians seemed to have lost nearly all that an army or a nation could lose short of complete surrender. The Germans gleefully, the Allies sadly, counted out Russia as a combatant. The world was prepared to behold the utter dissolution of the Russian armies and a triumphant German advance to Moscow, to Petrograd, or wherever else their plans might direct them.

Late in September, after a brief rest, the German armies marched against the new Russian line, with a view to the occupation of Riga before winter set in. To their utter surprise and to the astonishment of the world, they were stopped in their tracks. The Russian recuperation was remarkable, considering what they had undergone. They had lost close to a million prisoners during the year, had suffered casualties numbering more than three hundred thousand, had lost enough guns of every caliber to supply a great part of their armies anew. They had been driven far from their defensive positions into the interior of their country. They were desperately short of supplies. Yet they retained their morale, reorganized their armies and held the Germans. And it was not that the Germans made no further efforts to advance. On the contrary, Von Hindenburg made strenuous attempts during several weeks to break through to Riga, but not all his men and guns could win a road through. By October the German advance was definitely over.

A most remarkable feature of the Russian campaigns during their organized warfare was the ability and readiness of the Russian armies to attack. The German advance had hardly stopped before General Brusiloff was moving forward again in Galicia, cap-

turing prisoners to the number of a few thousand. He was to become better known the following year.

An inevitable sequel to the Russian defeat was the retirement of the Grand Duke Nicholas from the chief command, and the assumption of the office by the Czar himself. This was done to raise the morale of the nation; the actual direction of the armies remained with the generals.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TURKEY; THE DARDANELLES; ITALY; THE BALKANS, IN 1915.

Turkey had not been at war many months before it was evident that the frightful specter of a holy war—the bugaboo of centuries—would not materialize. It was not for want of a will to set it going; nor were strenuous efforts to that end lacking. The German Kaiser was willing, the Turkish rulers eager, to loose the terrors of an Orient-wide religious massacre. Here was Turkey's chief value in German eyes—her supposed power to unleash the fanaticism of the Mohammedans. The spiritual head of Islam sounded the call, invited all the faithful to rise and slay the Christians. But the Mohammedans of India, Persia, Egypt, of the French and Italian colonies, failed to respond. Not even the Arabs, the Pilgrim Fathers of Islam, arose to destroy the infidels. Only in the Turkish Empire and only against a helpless people was the edict obeyed. The Armenians suffered as did no other nation in this war. The terrors of unbridled savagery directed by scientific civilization descended upon them. In hundreds of towns and villages the male inhabitants were assembled and shot or sabred, the females turned over to the lust of the assassins. Thousands of women and children were collected and deported, a great band of them were forced to march across the burning desert of Mesopotamia. Thousands on this march



died of thirst; the few survivors vanished into the harems of half-savage Kurds. Out of the mists of uncertainty and rumor came the fact that from half a million to eight hundred thousand Armenians had been massacred. It was Turkey's greatest victory during the war.

The attempt of Turkey to regain her former dominion over Egypt began early in the year. On January 27th came the first collision with the defenders of the Suez Canal. In the German view of conditions, England would not be able to defend the canal successfully; her home troops would be occupied elsewhere, she would not dare to bring native soldiers from India, if indeed these soldiers did not lead in a general uprising. As for Australia—that far-off continent did not enter into German calculations.

The canal and Egypt would have been easy prey, if German calculations had been correct. But they were far from correct. Native Indian troops not only defended the canal but they also fought for the empire in the plains of Flanders. In November twenty thousand Australians landed in Egypt to complete their training. They were followed by larger forces, by New Zealanders, all men accustomed to a degree of tropical heat. And when, on February 3d, the Turks made their first serious attempt to cross from Asia to Africa, they were repelled after a short, hard battle. Another attempt in March met a like result. What the Germans had proclaimed as the vulnerable spot of the British Empire proved to be invulnerable to such forces as they were able to send against it.

In February occurred an event that caught the world's imagination and aroused its interest as hardly any other phase of the war had done; a British fleet attacked the forts of the Dardanelles. There was hardly a nation in the world but was concerned vitally in the outcome. To all the peoples of eastern Europe and western Asia, British success meant the disappear-

ance of the Turk as a governing force; to Turkey, it meant the end of her diminishing empire in Europe; to Germany, it meant the severance at the vital point of her prospective dominion. To Russia it meant economic freedom, access to the warm seas, a centuries-old dream realized. For England and France had agreed that Russia should have a voice in the disposal of Constantinople, as the price of continuing the war against Germany.

It was largely in Russia's behalf that the attack was made. It was vitally necessary to supply her with munitions, the lack of which was to prove so fatal. Another element that influenced the French and English to make the attack was that, if successful, it would almost surely bring in Bulgaria, Greece, and Roumania as allies. In 1915, the Dardanelles seemed the shortest road to victory.

The Anglo-Saxon and Latin peoples took it for granted that the attack would succeed. Turkey, as an antagonist, was almost despised, so poor was her military record of the last century. But the world did not take into consideration German leadership; it was in leaders and in supplies that Turkey had always been found wanting; the Turkish soldier did not lack bravery.

The Dardanelles or Hellespont has played its part in history since the days before history was written. This narrow channel, severing Europe from Asia, connecting the inland seas and waterways with the Mediterranean and the ocean, has been the prize of many a war, from the siege of Troy to the present day. Turkey, in command of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, sat upon the most favored spot on earth, from which the emperors and sultans of centuries had ruled a great part of the known world.

On Febrary 19th a fleet composed of English and French battleships began a bombardment of the forts

on the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. It was continued for some days, the *Queen Elizabeth*, Britain's newest dreadnaught, joining the assault. The old forts at the entrance to the straights were quickly demolished, but modern fortifications hidden in a welter of hills some miles up remained. These defenses commanded the narrows, where the channel is only two or three miles wide. By the end of the first week in March, the fleet had advanced a few miles up stream. Progress was slow, as the waters had to be swept for mines. Then on March 19th, just a month after the beginning of the attack, floating mines sank three battleships, two British and one French. The attack was promptly abandoned for a time, since it was impossible to break through as long as the Turks controlled the narrows, for they could send scores of mines against the fleet. Later, there appeared rumors to the effect that the Turkish forts had exhausted their ammunition and that if the fleet had persevered it could have gained a passage. This report bore all the earmarks of German propaganda. The Germans, with their careful efficiency, would be certain to provide ample defense for so important a place.

The British were not ready to abandon the attempt, and they now organized a joint attack by land and sea. There were immense difficulties in the way of such a campaign. The troops must be brought by sea and landed on a hostile shore in the face of the enemy. There was no base of supplies nearer than five hundred miles. Yet the military authorities ordained the attempt. First and last, it was largely a British effort, the French contingent being small. Joffre would not spare any of his men from France.

In the face of these difficulties the wisdom of the campaign will ever be questioned. There was no precedent in history for such an attempt. Against the Germans or Austrians it would not have been con-

sidered, even; against the Turks, it was thought to have a chance of success. To understand the Gallipoli campaign it is necessary to understand its object, which was, not to march an army to Constantinople, or elsewhere, but simply to put the fleet through the Dardanelles. Once past the narrows, the battleships could quickly dominate Constantinople, open the way for Russian grain to flow out and allied guns to flow in. This alone was the aim of the army; to land on the western side of the narrow peninsula and force their way across to the straights. That the attempt came so near to success only adds to the tragedy.

An army was collected literally from the ends of the earth; a French colonial division, a British division of the regular army, a naval brigade, and an Australian corps. The latter became known as the Anzacs, from Australia and New Zealand army corps. This army was mobilized in a harbor on the island of Lemnos, fifty miles or more from Gallipoli. On the night of April 24th it moved to its destined battlefield.

Never in the history of the world has such another landing been made. There was no harbor, no dock, no wharf; only unconnected bits of beaches. The Turks were entrenched at the water's edge, waiting for them, the beaches were a maze of barbed wire, the very waters were mined. Rising above the beaches were successive ridges lined with hundreds of cannon ready to pour a plunging fire upon the invaders. Not only had the troops to get ashore, but they had to take with them everything they would use, machine guns, ammunition, spades for digging trenches, food, even their drinking water had to be landed.

Yet those soldiers landed. They had to approach the shore in small boats, many of which were struck by shells and sunk. Hundreds were killed before they could set foot ashore. The first to land were nearly all killed or wounded, but the survivors found a bit

of shelter, or dug a hole, and held on. There were no trenches until they could capture some held by the Turks, and this was not possible on the first day. The first landings were made at dawn at four principal places, with two minor landings. All were successful, in that the survivors were able to cling to the shore. The Australians were especially admirable. It was the first time they had met an enemy in battle, yet they acted like veterans. It was only at their landing place that an immediate advance inland was made. From forty to sixty per cent of all the troops landed on this first day were killed or wounded.

The second night more troops landed, and the next day each unit was able to secure a footing under the very attempt of the Turks to push them into the sea. Then followed days of terrific conflict. These trenches were not like the trenches in France where quiet days were mingled with fighting. Every foot of advance had to be fought for. There could be no attempt to gain their ultimate objective until they could advance far enough inland to entrench, to secure a base for supplies on the peninsula, and to protect themselves from the direct fire of heavy guns. They were never out of danger of complete destruction or capture during these first efforts. All the battles during April and May were struggles to secure their position.

When the campaign was planned, it was as a combined effort of England, France, and Russia. But Russia was overtaken by misfortune, and gave up her attack on the Black Sea coast and the Bosphorus. England was left to face almost the whole Turkish army. During May the British lost three more battleships here. The *Goliath* was sunk by a mine, and on May 26th and 27th the *Triumph* and the *Majestic* were sunk by a submarine that had sailed from Germany through the Atlantic and Mediterranean. These losses resulted in a partial withdrawal of the fleet. Several times the British submarines penetrated the Darda-



nelles and sank Turkish warships and transports in the sea of Marmora.

By the first of June the Allies had won a position perhaps half way to the top of the series of hills. They now had elbow room and could prepare a serious attempt to reap the fruits of victory. Early in June they made a general advance of several hundred yards, which, since they had only a few scant miles to attain, was a considerable victory. On June 27th and 28th an even greater success was won, three successive lines of trenches were taken and the Turkish army showed its first signs of demoralization. Had reinforcements been at hand there would have been a great chance for final success at that moment. But reinforcements were in England or elsewhere; they were not at hand, and the opportunity was lost.

There was a month's lull in operations while the British waited for reinforcements. Fifty thousand fresh troops arrived about August first, and a new and final try for victory was made. This time it was the Australians who bore the brunt of attack. Half of the new troops were Anzacs, and these were landed with their fellow islanders. Their landing was accomplished in a manner unprecedented in warfare. It was important that the Turks should not suspect a new attack. During four nights the new troops were landed, and lay concealed by day in enormous dugouts prepared in advance. The ships that carried them did not approach until after dark and they were out of sight by dawn. The Turks saw no evidence of reinforcements. Such plans and preparations were well deserving of victory.

An entirely new landing was scheduled at Suvla Bay, farther north. The plan of battle was for the reinforced Australians to attack and thus hold the Turks to their places, while the new force from Suvla Bay turned the flank of the enemy. If matters went

well this new army would not have any foes in front of it, and it could march inland without interference.

The grand attack began the 6th of August. Not the Anzacs alone, but all the allied line attacked. They were successful not only in holding the enemy but also in making advances. But the vital part of the plan failed; the new army did not advance until it was too late. This force landed on time, the night of August 6th, after the great attack had begun; but for some reason, apparently a lack of staff organization, it did not advance for nearly forty-eight hours and even then was uncertain as to where it was to go. By then the Turks were aware of the new menace and had seized the goal themselves, which was the commanding heights, until then unoccupied. This failure made a tragedy of the whole campaign. It was the more distressing because a detachment of Anzacs actually won a section of the heights from which they could look down upon the waters of the Hellespont, the goal of all their efforts. It was then that Winston Churchill declared in the House of Commons that the troops were only a mile or so from the greatest victory of the ages. The Anzacs clung there for three days, waiting for the support that never came. They were even fired upon by the British war-ships, which, seeing them on the skyline, mistook them for Turks. The great adventure had failed.

The Dardanelles campaign was a subject of severe criticism, directed at the government officials and the commanding general. Inevitably, Sir Ian Hamilton was removed, a French cabinet fell, British ministers resigned. No criticisms of the troops themselves was possible; they had done all that men could do. Their very landing was a miracle, that they even approached victory was a military feat worthy of immortality. The only instance in which the army failed was in not advancing from Suvla Bay, and the troops themselves were not at fault. Any proper criticism must rest

upon the British authorities, first, for undertaking the expedition at all, and second, for not giving it full support once they were engaged in it.

The consequences of the Dardanelles failure were serious. It lowered British prestige immeasurably; it gave the Turks a great victory that kept them in the war for three more years; it served notice upon Russia that she would be left in her isolation; it made Greece and Roumania lukewarm and Bulgaria actively hostile. On the credit side, it kept the main Turkish forces from Egypt, the Caucasus and Mesopotamia, and caused an immense number of Turkish casualties. The British lost one hundred and fifteen thousand, of whom twenty-six thousand were killed, or died of wounds. The losses of the Anzacs alone were fifty thousand.

In December and January the troops were withdrawn, and what is remarkable, withdrawn without loss. The bodies of the slain were left upon the hill-sides of Gallipoli, to make it a shrine of the British Empire.

Turkey fought the Russians intermittently, and late in the year fought the British again, this time in lower Mesopotamia. A British force composed largely of native Indian troops advanced from the Persian Gulf. By September they were at Kut-El-Amara, two hundred miles inland, and on November 22d they were only eighteen miles from Bagdad. Their numbers were entirely too small for the undertaking; a strong Turkish army defeated them, pushed them back one hundred miles to Kut-El-Amara, where they besieged. All efforts to relieve them failed, and in the spring of 1916 the almost unheard-of occurrence—since the American Revolution—of a British army surrendering, was witnessed.

On May 23, 1915, Italy went to war with Austria-Hungary. Her aim was frankly to gain certain portions of Austrian territory that were Italian in popu-

lation. Of a section of Trentino containing three hundred and eighty thousand people, all but ten thousand were of Italian blood. The situation of Trieste was similar. Great Britain, France, and Russia guaranteed these sections and also the Dalmatian coast to Italy in return for her military aid.

Italy's campaign was difficult in the extreme. Her frontiers had been fixed by the enemy and were based upon Austria's military defensive and offensive needs. The whole region was mountainous, and an advance could be gained only by severe fighting. As a matter of fact, Italy made no advance as far as territory was concerned, during all of 1915, after she had come to the main Austrian defenses.

The Serbian campaign rested during the early months of the year. These were months of diplomatic activity in the Balkans, a contest in which Germany was the victor, mainly because of England's blunders. The British foreign office began the year with the obsession that the aid of Bulgaria was their great need, and to obtain this aid it labored for months through its diplomatic agents; while all the time Bulgaria was mortgaged to Austria and Germany. England might have had the aid of Greece and Roumania, had she sanctioned an attack by them upon Bulgaria. But on the contrary, England asked for portions of Greece and Roumania to give to Bulgaria in return for the latter's aid. These bits of territory were Bulgarian by race, and had been taken from her in the second Balkan war.

By attempting to win all the Balkan States, England won none of them, but instead, sacrificed Serbia. For after the Dardanelles and the diplomatic blunders, Greece and Roumania were more than ever confirmed in their neutrality.

This unfortunate affair left Serbia to resist the united strength of three foes. By October, Germany could turn from Russia, and General Mackensen

undertook a new campaign. He had a considerable army of Germans and Austrians, and with these forces he struck Serbia from the north and west. Simultaneously with the Austro-German attack, Bulgaria declared war and her troops invaded Serbia from the east. The result of this overwhelming attack was the complete destruction of Serbia as a nation for the time being. That the campaign lasted two months is a tribute to the Serbs, who, in their mountainous country, resisted to the utmost. But their stronghold, Nish, was captured on November 5th, and by the end of that month the Serbs were driven from all but a small section of their land.

The French and English, alarmed at the situation and sincerely regretting the disaster to which they had subjected Serbia, now attempted to go to her aid. In October and November, an Anglo-French army of about one hundred and seventy-five thousand landed at Salonica, in Greek territory, and as soon as they could organize the new army it marched northward to help the Serbs. There was a bare chance that, by reaching Uskub, they could save the day at least in part. But Uskub fell before they were halfway to it, and instead of aiding Serbia, the Allies were themselves in danger. They were in a narrow valley with only a single supply line. Early in December the Bulgarians in superior force outflanked the Anglo-French army and drove it back into Greece.

And now complications arose: King Constantine of Greece threatened to intern the Allied army, although they had landed in response to an appeal from the Greek premier, Venizelos. The latter and most of the Greek nation were pro-Ally, the King was pro-German, influenced by the Queen, a sister of the Kaiser. In this situation, Lord Kitchener visited Athens and threatened the king with dethronement. The Allies then received permission to occupy Salonica as a base, which they were already doing, fortifying it in antici-



pation of an attack. The world looked for an immediate attack upon Salonica by the victorious Germans, but none came.

The Serbs were completely defeated. In December the Bulgarians occupied the last bit of Serbia, and the defeated army was homeless. They had lost one hundred thousand prisoners besides the heavy casualties, had lost more than half of their own force. The whole nation had suffered severely from typhus during the year, and they were to suffer still more from their bitter enemies, the Bulgarians, who inflicted atrocities upon the people left behind. Truly, the Serbian people paid heavily for their opposition to Germany's imperial plans.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE END OF A VICTORIOUS GERMAN YEAR.

Germany's empire was won. Practically all the people she schemed to control were under her thumb; all the lands, nearly all the harbors and fortresses she coveted, were in her possession. In sixteen months of warfare she had greatly enlarged her dominion and increased the number of her subjects by half. From Hamburg to Bagdad the German war lord ruled over a continuous domain; a dream come true. The proudest empire of the ages had not been greater than this new world state promised to be. The Roman empire in its greatest days was not nearly so large or so populous. The empires of Alexander, of Charlemagne, of Louis the XIV. were dwarfed; not even Napoleon's empire was its equal in extent, numbers or wealth.

During the year just closing, Germany had clung fast to her conquests in France and Belgium, withstanding all efforts to drive her out. She had almost destroyed the Russian army, had won a large territory in Poland and Russia; had entirely conquered Serbia,

the country; had brought Bulgaria into the war, thus uniting her domain; she had strengthened Turkey to the point where she was able to resist successfully a strong British attack.

German enthusiasm was tremendous. Not only was the nation united in a resolve to keep the conquests, even to Belgium, but it supported the Pan-German party which demanded more ports, harbors, lands, and insisted upon great indemnities. Germany's allies, dazzled by the year of conquest, were bound more firmly to her chariot. The effect on Greece, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Roumania was to discourage any tendency to cast their lot with Germany's enemies, such a course invited destruction as swift as that which had overtaken Serbia and Montenegro.

But Germany's success was more seeming than real. She had the fruits of victory in her grasp, but she had not beaten her principal enemies, France and England, and until she had done so she could not enjoy the spoils. Not even Russia was defeated to the extent of being unable to fight; only small Serbia and Montenegro had suffered to that extent, and that for the moment only. To keep the empire she had won, Germany must win a victory on the west front as decisive as the one she had won in Russia. If she could end the war at once, she would be an undisputed victor.

Therefore, Germany's aim from henceforth was to end the war on terms that would leave her in possession of her conquests in the East, even though she gave up northern France and Belgium. All her future campaigns were based on this need. There were two ways in which such a conclusion of the conflict might be reached; either through a decisive military campaign that should crush France, or Britain, or both; or through a successful defense on her present battle lines, a defense that would exhaust her enemies. But the latter course would exhaust Germany as well, would necessarily continue through an indefinite number of

seasons, and it would always be subject to a successful battle on the part of the foe.

Germany's purpose for 1916 was to pursue the first course, to win by attack rather than by defense. All her years of preparation, all the advantage of strategic position, of superior artillery and numbers, could be fully utilized in an offensive campaign. Even though at times and places she might be on the defensive, it would always be in coördination with an attack elsewhere. Whenever the time might come that Germany would be on the defensive from necessity, when she could no longer force the fighting, that hour would foreshadow German defeat.

The logical sequence of the victories of 1915 would be a triumph over either France or England in 1916. Germany chose to attack France. Even after the months of battles during which France had so often opposed, so often defeated her, there still lingered in the German mind a belief in the essential weakness of France, a supposed decadence, a want of staying power that would be her undoing in the critical hour. From the day the campaigns of 1915 were ended, preparations for 1916 began. Nothing was left undone that the thorough Germans could conceive of; the most minute preparations were made for the hour of attack.

However brilliant the German victories, however confident they rendered the Teutonic allies, however disheartened the crushed nations and sympathetic neutrals might be, the effect on the two unshaken allies, France and Britain, was to spur them to renewed efforts. France was already doing nearly her utmost, both in fighting and in production of munitions. To France, the problem was exactly the same as it had been a year previous; to hold fast until England should come to the rescue. To France, January 1916 was a year nearer victory than January 1915 had been; so strong was her faith. Instead of the hopes and promises of aid of the year before, there was partial fulfillment

by Britain. So France set herself in grim determination to hold on, with only a degree of realization of the terrible ordeal before her.

To Great Britain, 1915 was a year of disappointment. Three great military failures and some serious diplomatic blunders had marked the course of the year. There was lack of success at Gallipoli, positive failure along the Tigris and checkmate at Salonica. There had been small successes on the western front which were essentially failures in that they had not measured up to expectations or possibilities. But none of these failures had been fatal—to Britain or to the allied cause. In the battles of Neuve Chapelle and Loos could be found promise of great things in the days to come. There was assurance that the Germans could be driven back; the problem was to train the army to do it.

This army was in the making. Britain was at last awake to the immensity of the task before her. There was no longer an illusion that a few hundred thousand English, together with the French, could beat the Germans; even the illusion that victory was to be had by waiting for it was losing advocates. There was awakening to the mechanical necessities of the war, to the unlimited output of munitions required, to the absolute need for big guns by the thousand. Preparations went on with increasing momentum; old habits and prejudices were laid aside in the hour of great need. English union labor had rallied to the cause as earnestly as the candidates for the battlefield. Under the leadership of Lloyd George the needs of the nation and of the allied cause were put foremost. Trained men were transferred from unessential occupations to ship building and munition making, or were sent to the army. Women workers by thousands began to appear in industrial occupations, taking the place of men. They acted as chauffeurs, engineers, worked in munition factories, handled trucks in ware-



houses. There was hardly an occupation except those of fighting and ministerial duties in the English cabinet in which women did not engage.

Campaigns for soldiers stirred every corner of the empire. By the end of this year, three and one-half millions in the British Isles alone had offered their lives to their country, while volunteers in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa were coming in by the hundreds of thousands.\*

The campaign of 1915 was not over before the English people began to look forward to the new year, to the "Big Push" that should carry the war into Germany. The expectation based on hope and desire rather than on facts, was that the Germans would be driven from France and Belgium before another winter. Such hopes did not take into consideration the almost impossible task of creating an effective army of millions in two years.

But though the popular hopes were doomed to disappointment for the coming year, the military leaders of the Allied nations also had their visions of a long step toward final victory. They were in no wise disturbed by their lack of success thus far. Winston Spencer Churchill made a prophetic declaration when, during the winter of 1915-16 he said, in effect, that the Germans and their allies might hold their present lines for a year or so longer, might even make further advances, and yet be more completely defeated in the end than if the French and English had been able to reach Berlin the first year.

The one great lesson of 1915 was the need for co-ordinated efforts. All during the months when Germany was pursuing her successful campaigns in the east and south, the allied front in the west had been virtually inactive, necessarily so through the lack of munitions. The resources of the Allied nations were vastly greater than those of the Central Powers, but unless these resources could be put into terms of men



and guns actually in line of battle, and their strength exerted simultaneously, they would never bring full victory. The first step toward a united campaign was a military conference held in Paris in March, 1916, attended by representatives of all the Allied powers. It was a half step in the right direction.

France and Britain faced the new year with calm confidence, a confidence based on fact and reason, on their growing military strength, and very largely on the British navy. The navy was performing its task with unceasing vigilance. Sea power was a virtual balance to all the German victories thus far. Hamburg, Bremen, and the other German ports might as well have been in British hands, for all their avail to Germany. Economic pressure was Britain's heaviest gun. It did not seem possible that Germany, which had imported annually two billion dollars worth of food, clothing, metals, and other necessities of life, could long exist with the supply cut off.

Another watchword of the Allies was "attrition." Figures seemed to guarantee German defeat, seemed almost to foretell the hour. The enemy's ultimate resources in men were known, even though his actual fighting numbers remained in doubt. And, given the continuous wasting of soldiers, the time would inevitably come when the Germans could no longer hold their lines. This was a terrible road to victory, one of slaughter to friend and foe alike. But the Allies calculated that the Germans would give up rather than tread this road to the bitter end. It was known that there were more than two million German casualties thus far. Two more years of attrition promised to bring the end of the war, if it was not brought to an earlier finish by other means. The Russian collapse overturned the working of this theory.

Of the lesser occurrences of the war, the Zeppelin and the submarine did the most to bring home to England the reality of the conflict, aside from her own

half-million casualties. The great airships and the swift planes of Germany began to carry the war to English cities. But it was not until October, 1915, that the first serious Zeppelin raid was made on London. War in the air, destruction from the air, held the ultimate terrors of Armageddon—in the imagination of mankind. Such warfare necessarily involved taking the lives of noncombatants, of women and children. It seemed too terrible for reality. But nothing was too terrible for the Germans to inflict upon their enemies. Towns and cities lived in nightly expectation of bombs from the sky. Nothing the recruiting agents could have done would have been half so effective in securing volunteers. The sight of mangled innocents filled the nation with effective wrath. By the end of 1915 nearly fifteen hundred casualties from air raids had been suffered.

The other weapon of the Germans that was directly affecting the English nation was proving more harmful. The submarines were sinking many of Britain's finest vessels, were taking almost daily toll from the Mistress of the Seas as she sent forth her ships. At first, the submarine was used to attack only naval vessels. But in February the Germans declared certain kinds of food subject to military control. The British promptly added these to the contraband list. The Germans then retaliated by declaring a submarine blockade of the British Isles, announcing that they would sink all enemy vessels, whether naval or merchant, and all neutral ships in the war zone. This was the beginning of the critical phase of submarine activity that did more than anything else to make Germany's defeat absolute and overwhelming.

The U-boats were immediately successful in bagging valuable prey. In June the British claimed to have lost only one hundred and thirty ships, half of which had been sunk by other agencies than submarines. By October, it was admitted that the losses

totaled one hundred and eighty-three merchant ships and one hundred and seventy-five fishing vessels, while at the end of 1915, the Germans reported the sinkings of more than five hundred ships of all nations, with a tonnage of nearly a million. The navy was ever watchful for the U-boats, but during the early months of the war it did not succeed in destroying any large number of them.

These conflicting policies of Germany and Britain affected neutral nations greatly. By reason of her control of the seas, England could and did interfere blandly with the commerce of Holland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, in order to check the efforts of Germany to draw supplies from abroad by way of these countries. In justice to Britain, it may be said that her interference was limited to this one object. The United States suffered less inconvenience than other neutral countries, but still enough to create vast irritation with both belligerents, an irritation that changed to white wrath against Germany when the *Lusitania* was sunk. This wanton act, which was the occasion for a holiday of rejoicing in Germany, of "victory" medals, instantly distinguished the two sides of the conflict in the American mind, clearing the atmosphere, and creating a hostile feeling that later made welcome our entry into the war.

According to some German opinions, the United States was already one of the chief enemies of Germany by virtue of her war supplies. The sale of munitions was assuming tremendous proportions. During one period of thirty-six hours, nine large steamships left New York laden with supplies for the Allies. This was in 1915, when the exports had not reached their high point. Here is a measure of Britain's sea power, in that Germany was unable to get rubber, cotton, and copper, three things she terribly needed, while her enemies were able to buy to the extent of their requirements, or to the extent of the

supply. Before the war was many months old, the export of numerous articles of warfare to the Allies had mounted in value to scores of millions. Automobiles valued at sixty-five millions, horses and mules valued at eighty-six millions, went across the Atlantic; while the needs of the actual battle line, explosives, were exported to the value of only sixty-five million dollars. The latter item grew immensely as American factories increased their output. One American company, the Dupont, had three hundred million dollars worth of war orders in 1915. They increased their plants many fold, and their employees to more than sixty thousand.

But the Allies, with the exception of Russia, planned to stand upon their own feet in the matter of guns and shells. The cost of home-made munitions was much less than those bought abroad. First and last, France supplied all her own needs and supplied many guns to her allies. England only approached this condition toward the end of the war.

## CHAPTER XI.

### VERDUN.

The Battle of Verdun is the epic of the war; the complete story of it will be the Iliad of our time. It is a tale of the heroism of modern man, of valor worthy of the flower of knighthood of the days of old, of the national steadfastness of France that won the admiration of the world. It is a tale of the bravery of German soldiers, of the fatuity of German insight, of the failure of German plans.

Verdun is the northernmost of the great barrier fortresses that guarded the Franco-German frontier. The town stands on the Meuse River amidst the hills of Lorraine. Forts crown all of the surrounding hills. Northeast of the Verdun group of hills is a

broad valley, and some few miles beyond stands the fortress of Metz, in the hands of the Germans since 1870. At the outbreak of the war in 1914, the Germans, crossing the border from Metz, had come almost to the edge of the Verdun hills and had flowed around on either side, threatening to surround them, after which the capture of the fortress would be only a question of time. The victory of the Marne had relieved one flank, while the other remained in the hands of the enemy. This was the famous St. Mihiel salient, which, however, played little part in the siege of Verdun. From October, 1914, to February, 1916, there was no change in the battle lines around Verdun.

Verdun was as strongly fortified after the old plan of defenses as was possible for French ingenuity to conceive. But the lessons of Liège, Namur, and Antwerp were quickly utilized and the plan of defense changed from stationary forts to mobile batteries. It still retained the reputation of being the strongest citadel in the world, whereas, under the changed conditions, there were elements of weakness, of which the Germans were fully aware. It was in a narrow semicircle thrust into the enemy lines, hence subject to converging attacks from three sides. A salient is always weak to a certain degree. Another element of weakness was the lack of railways. The Germans at St. Mihiel had cut one line, and they had another under their guns west of the Meuse, preventing its use. Only one narrow-gauge line remained, entirely insufficient to supply the needs of a long battle.

Verdun held a sentimental value to France; to lose Verdun would have been a blow to French national pride. This also the Germans understood, and it was one of the factors that determined the place of attack. Germany counted heavily upon a successful outcome of the assault. To her, it was to be the critical battle of the war; on this battle she centered her chief energies for half a year. To win Verdun seemed, to



the Germans, to assure the victorious peace they so earnestly desired. This belief was based on a misconception of the French army and the French nation. In the eyes of the Germans, France was desperately tired of the war, had only a faint hope of winning, and only the hope of regaining Alsace and Lorraine kept her in the fighting. She needed but one serious defeat, such as the capture of Verdun, to be in the mood for any peace that did not deprive her of further territory. The capture of Verdun would be the most serious defeat, short of the destruction of her armies, that Germany could inflict upon France, because France would thereby lose the starting place for an invasion of Lorraine. The Germans, furthermore, still clung to the notion with which they began the war that the French armies would collapse under terrific strain. The German plan in the Verdun attack was for greater results than that of gaining a few more miles of France; it was to win peace by crushing the spirit of France.

In February, a month in which campaigning was not considered possible, a number of sharp German attacks were made along the entire French line. This was notice of an attack, but the French were left in doubt as to the place. There were strong reasons impelling the Germans to attack so early in the year. It was well known to them that the British were arming at least two million men for the 1916 campaign, and it was also known that these armies would not be ready for battle for some months to come. If Germany could compel the use of these troops while they were still raw, if they were of necessity thrown into battle, it would be a very great gain in that it would surely prevent any Allied offensive during the rest of the year. Equally compelling was the Russian situation. Germany by now realized that she had not crushed the Russians the previous year, realized that a new attack could be expected when the season per-

mitted. Russian tactics had hitherto proved most disconcerting to Germany. Several times she had been compelled to change her plans to deal with the Slav hordes. Here was the main reason for a February attack on France. It was the 1914 situation over again, an attempt to defeat France before Russia could help.

One of the military advantages accruing to Germany from her years of preparation was a great reserve army. She had enough troops to hold all of the many long fronts with immediate reserves for these forces, and in addition she had an army of perhaps half a million that was unattacked. This army, in the hands of Hindenburg or Mackensen, was used for defense or attack as needed; it had been used to strengthen the Austrians when they were threatened with utter defeat; it had been the weapon that forced the Russians back a hundred miles and more; part of it had gone with Mackensen through Serbia. Now, this reserve force was turned over to Crown Prince Frederick Wilhelm for the attack on Verdun. Three hundred thousand German troops were gathered for the assault. A schedule of advance was made, that called for the occupation of the town in not more than ten days.

On February 21st the assault began. For nine hours a terrible fire was poured upon the French defenders of the advanced lines. Every vestige of trenches was obliterated, the soldiers were blown to pieces or terribly wounded. Nothing so awful had yet been seen in warfare as the German fire. When the guns ceased their roar the infantry advanced exactly as scheduled, and established themselves in the ruined defenses. On February 22d the artillery prepared the way for the next step forward, searching out every yard of ground in the immediate front, and almost every acre back of the lines, deluging the defenders with the eruptions of monster guns, burying

them in the ruins of their own trenches. The explosions shook heaven and earth. The Germans fired nearly a million high explosive shells daily for four days. The French clung to any shelter that offered, expecting death in an instant or an hour, but asking only that they might kill a few Germans before the end came.

At the end of four days, the Germans were in Fort Douaumont, a day later than they had planned. They had literally torn it from the dying grasp of the defenders. Douaumont was considered the key to Verdun; its capture was heralded to the world as a forerunner of certain victory. The Kaiser, who from a distant hill had watched the battle, proclaimed the triumph of his invincible armies, while his agents the world over echoed his words. The Teutons and their allies foresaw an early peace.

In France the situation was instantly seen as serious. So bad a position to defend was Verdun that General Joffre was prepared to evacuate the whole salient. But French statesmen for once interfered with military plans, declaring that Verdun stood as a visible sign of French strength and should be defended. There should French and German manhood, valor, and genius clash to the finish. The military command accepted the decision and at once took means to hold the fortress. General Pétain was sent to take command, reinforcements were hurried in. The difficulties of transportation were overcome by use of motor trucks—thousands of them. Day and night there was a continuous line fifty miles long, taking men, munitions, and food to the defenders. The motor transport was the salvation of Verdun.

Only about one hundred and twenty thousand French held the Verdun region when the storm broke. The German advance was made by fourteen divisions, with only three French divisions to oppose them. But the first four days advance was the last the Ger-

mans made cheaply and easily. The defense stiffened when the decision was made to hold Verdun, if it were possible. The Germans were continuing their advance, seemingly as inexorable as fate. The critical moment came on February 26th, the day after the taking of Douaumont. Pétain launched his first counter offensive, sending in the famous Iron Corps, the Twentieth. Douaumont was retaken, the German momentum was lost. During the next three days, Douaumont changed hands three times. The struggle was terrific, unprecedented, exhausting. Regions that had just been subjected to a volcano of shell fire and in which, by German calculations, every French soldier should be dead, still held enough live defenders to dispute every inch of ground. After the first rush of the foe was stopped, the battle became apparently a struggle for bits of ground; not an advance of fifty yards did the Germans make but they were driven back by a counter attack. Positions changed hands daily or twice daily. But it was not at all a struggle for lines of trenches; it was a death grapple between the French and German nations. To the blazing French spirit, every step forward of the enemy was a dishonor to France, a stain to be washed out with blood.

When the Germans found themselves checked on the edge of the Douaumont plateau, they promptly extended their attack to the southwest, where they as swiftly swept over the low ground to the edge of the hills, and as suddenly stopped when they came to the real defenses. Here again every gain had to be paid for by the death of German soldiers. The first week saw one hundred square miles captured by the Germans; the second week only twenty, while the gains of the succeeding weeks could more easily be stated in terms of square yards.

The village and fort of Vaux were won by the Germans on March 9th; but the advance at that point suffered the same fate as at Douaumont. The fort

changed hands many times; sometimes the Germans held one side of the ravine in which the town is and the French the other side.

The German advance was at first made as economically as possible; the artillery preparing the way and not more than two or three regiments thrown in at one time. But later, as the German leaders grew desperate and demanded success at any price, soldiers were sacrificed almost recklessly to gain the goal; and the goal was not won. It was as if Pickett's charge at Gettysburg had been repeated daily and nightly for weeks. Regiments and divisions did not last long in the hellish fire of Verdun. There was a constant flow of fresh troops, both German and French, into the crucible; a few days later, the remnants were withdrawn. Neither side dared to publish their losses, which, on the part of the Germans, were too terrible for their lack of success, since they were the aggressors. Sir Douglas Haig offered any part of the British army for use at Verdun, but it had become a matter of pride for the French to hold it by their own efforts. But the British shortly took over thirty more miles of the front, increasing their line to eighty miles, thus releasing a large number of French.

The third phase of the conflict began the second week in March, when the Crown Prince attacked on the opposite side of the Meuse, west of Verdun. A success here would win the battle, even though the original frontal attack failed. An eminence called "Dead Man's Hill" here occupied the commanding position that Douaumont did on the other side of the river, although it was two hundred and eighty feet lower than the latter. A week's attack took the Germans to the foot of the hill, and on March 14th they attained the lesser of the two summits. The fight for Dead Man's Hill became as deadly as that for Douaumont and Vaux. The Germans were unable to complete their conquest of the summit, nor did they succeed



in flanking it. For twelve days they assaulted Hill 304, west of Dead Man's Hill, without winning it.

And still the Germans persevered, turning their attention to Pepper Ridge, which, if won, would be a side gate to Verdun between Douaumont and Dead Man's Hill. When, after days of assault, the Germans made their final attack on April 18th and failed, the French leaders knew Verdun was saved. It is not the purpose of this short history to narrate in detail all of such a battle, even if the facts were yet available. Through March, April, May, June, and into July, and until the battles on the Somme called away the German reserves, did they persevere in the attempt. For weeks, at home and abroad, Verdun was proclaimed as a triumph of German soldiery and generalship, until the fact of defeat could no longer be concealed.

In May the French began to regain ground, although in small bits. The Germans were pushed back from Pepper Ridge, and on May 22d the French gained a footing in Douaumont which was only a mass of ruins. The Germans pushed them back, however, and in June again attempted to traverse the original road to Verdun through the center. They even made a considerable advance during this period, gaining about a mile forward, and for the first time won complete possession of Vaux. Another redoubt, Thixmont, at the limit of the new German advance, changed hands even more often than Douaumont. But it was their last step forward. By the middle of July, when all serious attempt to advance was over, the Germans had gained about six miles of France on a fifteen-mile front; a slight reward for the sacrifice of three hundred thousand to five hundred thousand men. Thirty thousand French were captured in the first three weeks, but thereafter, the majority of the casualties were numbered in killed and wounded. All through the weeks and months, French soldiers marched into almost certain death until two hundred thousand of them had

fallen. They marched for France, glad to lay themselves on the altar, ever bearing in mind the famous saying of Pétain's "They shall not pass." Never had France been so worthy of Joan of Arc.

After the French soldiers themselves, the defense of Verdun was due to the guns, especially the famous "seventy-fives," a three-inch field gun of wonderful mechanism, that once registered could be fired continuously without further aiming. This marvelous rapid-fire gun poured annihilating fire upon every German position, caught many advancing lines in direct fire. The French were never short of shells, thanks to the motor transport.

The sequel to the German attack came in October. General Neville was then in command, Pétain having been promoted to the command of a group of armies. Three divisions made a sudden attack that recovered Douaumont, and a few days later, Vaux also was recaptured, with a loss of only five thousand French. Six thousand Germans were captured. An even greater challenge was made on December 15th, when General Mangin advanced again, and retook a great part of the ground lost in February and March, including every point of strategic value. Eleven thousand prisoners were taken on this occasion.

By their successful defense of Verdun, the French sent German prestige to the lowest point it had yet seen during the war. It was a full answer to all the German victories of the previous year and discounted in part the triumphs the Germans were yet to win. It disposed of the tradition of the German superman, inflicted a terrible blow upon German leadership, it withheld from the Crown Prince his laurels of victory. It opened a window through which the Allies might see final victory. All France felt that the crisis was past, however long the end might be delayed.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE BATTLES ON THE SOMME.

The struggle of the Somme, to be seen in its true light, should not be considered by itself. The attempt of the French and British to advance through the German lines was but a part of a general Allied offensive, and it was planned as such. In June, while the Germans were occupied with Verdun, and the Austrians with Italy, the Allies coördinated offensive began when the Russians under Brusiloff began their greatest campaign. In July the French and British attacked; in August the Italians, and in September the Roumanians and the Salonica army did their part. That the Germans were able to check the attack on all fronts does not lessen their value. The plan of a united attack was the strongest weapon of the Entente Allies, and the only one that held any hope of an early victory.

The country of the Somme in that part of its course which was the scene of the battle is a region of gently rolling hills and valleys, adaptable for the action of small bodies of troops in connection with a general battle. One part of the line could advance safely, even though another part should be held up. But this was an advantage lying equally with the defense.

The larger plan of the battle, as has been said, was to coöperate with all the allies in the hope of breaking the enemy lines on some one of the fronts. The local plan, aside from the aim of inflicting as many casualties as possible upon the German army, was to gain certain strategic points that would compel a retreat over a considerable front. Bapaume and Péronne were the immediate, Cambrai and St. Quentin the ultimate objectives of the British and French.

When, during the battle of Verdun, the British ex-

tended their lines, the new flank met the French close to the river Somme. The German line here formed a huge salient; by breaking in a section of it, the abandonment of the rest would be forced. The French army adjoining the British was under the command of General Foch. His army and Haig's planned a joint attack; the French on a front of about eight miles, the British about twenty miles.

Preparations for the battle began months in advance. Both allies made huge accumulations of shells for their many guns. The British had more to do in the way of equipment because of their former lack of it. Their attacks of the previous year had failed largely because of the lack of shells. But there was to be no scarcity of ammunition at the Somme. Lloyd George's work as director of munitions began to be apparent in the spring of 1916, as thousands of guns and millions of shells arrived behind the lines. The output of explosives was eleven thousand times more than in peace times, in England; as many shells for big guns as were made during the first entire year of the war, were, by 1916, merely the output of four days. A signal corps of Haig's army required forty-six miles of motor trucks in constant service to supply its needs.

Greater than the guns in value were the men. Britain's expeditionary army had grown from one of a hundred thousand to a mighty force of nearly two million. Britain was at last ready; the long vigil of France promised to be recompensed. There had been nearly five million volunteers in the British Empire, up to the time of the Somme, but in spite of that, limited conscription was put in force in England, since it was recognized that the wastage would be great.

The momentous battle began on July 1st. For nearly a week before, the whole Allied line flamed with shot and shell, heralding an attack, but leaving

the foe in doubt as to where it would come. But, as a matter of fact, the Germans were not greatly deceived. They knew for weeks in advance that the British would attack, and made tremendous efforts to strengthen their lines, with the idea that a British failure would be the greatest possible victory for the Germans. But they were slightly in error as to the place of attack, having prepared to meet it on the northern half of the actual battleground, but not on the southern. They did not anticipate a French attack, believing their forces to have been exhausted by Verdun.

When the soldiers went over the top on the morning of July 1st, the French and the extreme right of the English swept forward almost at once to their first objectives. In three days Foch's men advanced six miles to the outskirts of Péronne, while the British were four miles forward at their farthest point. Twenty thousand prisoners were taken in the first rush. But the left of the British was held up by the strong defenses of the Germans. The enemy showed an amazing mastery of trench warfare; having foreseen the intense bombardments, he took measures to enable the troops to hold their lines in spite of the rush. The most effective defenses were huge dugouts, invulnerable to the heaviest shells; these, in many instances, sheltered hundreds of men. Taking refuge in these bomb-proof shelters during a bombardment, the Germans swarmed out as soon as the firing ceased, and were ready to meet an infantry attack with machine-gun fire.

About twelve miles of the British attacking force were stopped in their tracks. From the town of Thiepval, northward, they ran against these defenses, and suffered terrible losses during the first day, and at night the survivors crawled back to their own lines. For the time the British abandoned their attack in the northern half of the battlefield, and the Germans pro-



claimed to the world the defeat of the British army. But the latter took even Thiepval and Beaumont-Hamel in time. Meanwhile, they concentrated their efforts in the part of the field where they had been partly successful.

The French had made their great advance at one step, almost, and had to wait until the British brought their line forward before they attempted to go farther. British attacks were almost continuous; a bit of ground, a hill summit, a ruined village were taken one by one. They first shelled each desired place and then captured it, or partly so, in a great rush. The Germans were brave and their defense was strenuous. They were proud veterans, owning no equals as soldiers; the British fought to establish not only equality but supremacy. The fight became one of man against man, German against Briton; a fight in which bayonets, bombs, clubbed rifles and fists had their part. It was less a struggle for ground than a contest for mastery between the races. Not a mile, not a yard of advance was gained undisputed, and not a gain was held in peace. A battalion that won its objectives could expect the fiercest attempts to drive it out. But the British were keyed up to this kind of fighting and they gave the foe no rest.

Two weeks after the beginning of the battle, a second general advance was attempted. It was successful in breaking entirely through the second German line in places. A spectacular part of this action was a raid by a squadron of British cavalry, almost unheard-of since the war of positions began. The horsemen broke through into the open, inflicted some casualties, took some prisoners, and returned in safety. The British took ten thousand prisoners in two days. For three days after the break the Germans made tremendous efforts to drive back the enemy. Their utmost strength in guns and men, their full resources in shells and bravery, were exerted to cancel the gains

of the British and French. But the Allies held onto all they had won.

On July 20th the French made new gains, widening their six-mile advance to the entire ten miles of their part of the battle. On the 23d the British gained a fortified village on the slope of the ridge. The command of the high ground is always the chief prize in any battle. The ridge at the Somme ran close to the original front line, north of Thiepval, but farther south, back of Tricourt, it was a few miles east of the starting place of the battle. As long as it was in German hands, they had the advantage of observation, and also could bring up reënforcements unseen. To gain the ridge was the first task of the British; to gain even a footing on the slope was a small triumph. The entire second month of the battle was a struggle for the ridge. The third system of defenses, supposedly the last fortified line the Germans had prepared, lay between the British and the summit. Rod by rod, position by position, the British wrested this line from the foe. No sooner was a wrecked and half-filled trench captured than it had to be defended against the attacks of its late possessors. The fight for a group of farm buildings often lasted for days. The struggle for any forest land was especially exhausting and costly. Delville Wood, which cost many British lives to gain, became Devil's Wood, to the soldiers.

The most deadly weapon of the defenders were machine guns. These could be placed in any bit of shelter and from cover pour a sheet of leaden hail upon troops advancing in the open. The German dugouts were new to the British and they often passed them by, at first, only to be caught in the rear by German machine gunners, who had emerged from their holes. The British soon learned to clean up the dugouts as they went. Machine guns were the most hated and dreaded of all weapons. A line of men

caught exposed to direct fire lost a third of their number in a short time. Not even the immense shells were so terrible. If each of the shells fired had killed or wounded a man, both armies would have been destroyed in a day. If one shell in ten had found a human mark, no army could have endured the loss. But machine-gun bullets by the hundred thousand flew over the battle lines, and many of them found their billets.

Aëroplanes were used on a greater scale than ever. At the outset, the British had gained absolute supremacy in the air, simply by mobilizing their planes. They kept the German scouts from finding their big guns, their roads full of troops and supplies. But when the Germans saw the importance of the battle, they too assembled planes by the score. Both sides were ever busy in bombing and observing the enemy lines. In the greatest air battle yet seen on any one day, forty-two planes of the three combatants were lost.

But in spite of machine-gun fire, in spite of the utmost efforts of the Germans, the British won the ridge. After a month of constant fighting, they advanced to the top, and early in September had won seven miles of the summit. To say that an advance of only a mile was represented in the month's fighting, is to dwarf the achievement of the British troops. But a mile was a big gain in trench warfare, and it represented the utmost efforts of several hundred thousand soldiers. The British as well as the French were through the third German line; but so slow had been the advance that new defenses were ready for the enemy.

September found the Allies still fighting forward, throwing in new men, using up enemy reserves. On September 3d and 4th there was a renewed advance; down the slope of the ridge this time. On the 9th Ginchy was won. On the 12th the French made their

largest single day's gain of territory. This was in striking contrast to Verdun, where the Germans made no gains of consequence after the first two weeks.

The bulk of the fighting was done by English and Scotch regiments, Londoners, Yorkshiresmen, Highlanders. The Irish had a part in some of the fiercest struggles; they were among the troops that broke the second German line on July 14th, and they bore the brunt of the final attack on the ridge. The colonies did their share. The Anzacs first appeared in France during this year, and were assigned to the Somme region. They fought after their own impetuous fashion, and the Germans soon learned to fear them, even as the Turks had feared them. The Canadians had thus far been at Ypres, but they appeared at the Somme in September. The men from North America are given credit for an innovation in trench warfare—the raid for prisoners and information. By this means commanders learned what troops were in front of them, and of what strength they were. In future battles trench raids were an important part of the preparation for attack.

On September 14th the British sprang one of the great surprises of the war, by using a new weapon, one that was destined to shorten it by at least a year. This was the "tank." Here at last was a way to deal at once with barbed wire, trenches, buildings and machine guns. Concentrated artillery fire could deal with the first three—if hits were made. But machine guns were always troublesome, even after the most terrific bombardment. They escaped destruction in the dugouts. But the tank could make directly against a nest of machine guns, climbing over trenches and shell craters, flattening the lines of barbed wire and crashing down ruined buildings. It was invulnerable to rifle or machine-gun bullets; only the larger shells could harm it.

The tank, as it was called, was not the invention of



any one man, but rather the adaption to military use of the caterpillar belt tractor used for agricultural and other purposes. Colonel Swinton of the British army was responsible for its construction.

There were only a few of those first tanks, but they did in a day what soldiers unaided could hardly have done in two weeks. They were an utter surprise to the Germans, who fled from before their path or surrendered in terror. Behind the line of tanks marched the British soldiers, for once in little danger from machine guns. Canadian and English troops took part in the advance, which swept forward two miles in a line six miles long. A wedge was pushed between Péronne and Baupaume, and several thousand prisoners were captured.

The tanks made a great sensation in the military world, and it was decided to construct them in large numbers. They were half expected to sweep the Germans back at once, but there were defects in the first ones used—some broke down, others were damaged by enemy shells, so that two-thirds of them were put out of action.

At the end of two months and a half the Allies had captured sixty thousand prisoners, had taken forty towns and villages; surely a great change from the days when they clung to the edge of Ypres, barely able to hold their own.

While the British right and the whole French attacking line were advancing, the British left before Thiepval was still almost in its original position, thus far unable to advance. But late in September the British made a determined effort to get forward. Deluging the enemy lines with shells, they next laid down the greatest artillery barrage fire yet seen in the war, and under cover of it the troops took Thiepval, with all its machine-gun nests and dugouts. They still could not advance as fast as they did farther south, but the pressure on the German army was ever strong. The



Germans had boasted that their defenses were impregnable; but the British wiped them up one by one. About the same time, the French and British together took the important town of Combles.

The season was now well advanced, and any greater progress was ended for the year. In October the British made another slight advance beyond Thiepval. In November the French completed the capture of the fourth enemy line, which put them beyond the original defenses. On November 13th the British began a new phase of the battle, pushing forward along the Ancre brook, that formed the northern boundary of the original Somme battle. They captured five thousand more prisoners, resisted a strong counter attack, and made gains that would be valuable later. But the rains of winter put a stop to all major campaigning; the first battles of the Somme were over.

The Somme marks the dividing line of the war. It was then that the first forward movement began, that two years later was to bring victory. It marked the break in the series of spectacular German victories. It was the first assurance that British armies composed of men taken from civilian life could meet their professional enemy on equal terms; that the British guns and gunners would be equal to the occasion. The British went into the Somme recruits and emerged veterans, fit for anything.

In duration, in numbers engaged and in casualties, the battles of the Somme were approached only by the Russian campaigns and by Verdun, of any preceding action. In no previous war had any struggle approximated more than a day or two of this five months' battle. First and last, the British used close to a million soldiers; the Germans about the same number; while Foch engaged a smaller force, since his fighting was not continuous as was that of the British.

The British losses for July and August averaged more than four thousand daily; for September, they

were thirty-eight hundred; for October, thirty-six hundred daily. To understand this great loss, imagine the total population of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., as being killed or wounded in one week. For the whole period of the war thus far, the British loss averaged one thousand men each day. During this period, the Germans and Russians were suffering losses equal to, if not greater than, those of the English. The French, Italians, and Austrians were losing men by hundreds of thousands. As an example, the losses in killed and wounded of all combatants during August, 1916, would more than equal the combined population of Albany, Trenton, Dayton, Salt Lake City, and Spokane.

The geographical objectives of the attack were not gained, Péronne and Bapaume were not won, but the moral result was great. The new British armies had established their supremacy; had begun the battle facing proud, confident Germans, had ended it with an enemy shaken to the heart, fearful of the coming year.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE WAR ON OTHER FRONTS IN 1916.

The transfer of the Russian Grand Duke Nicholas to the command of the armies facing the Turks was assurance that there would be activity on that front. The fighting began early. In January and February the Russian armies fought their way southward and westward into Armenia. In February, in the dead of winter, they captured the important fortified city of Erzerum, and with this as a center, they spread out in all directions. It began to look as though the Russians and not the English were to close the career of the Turkish Empire. The former were many hundred miles nearer Constantinople than were the British in Mesopotamia; and the latter were, at this time, besieged. Another Russian army was progressing slowly

along the south shore of the Black Sea toward Trebizond, which they captured in April.

This Russian activity thwarted any designs the Turks may have had upon Suez; although they did make a weak attack on Egypt in August, 1916; but it was easily defeated.

On the main Russian front, there was almost constant fighting. In December, January, March, and April the commander of the northern armies, Kuropatkin—of Japanese war fame—made strong attacks that occupied numerous German troops. Brusiloff, the southern commander, made an ineffective attempt in February to advance.

The activity of the Teutonic allies toward their own plans began in May, when, on the 15th of that month, the Austrians made their first assault on the Italian lines. Up to that time, they had rested upon the defensive. Italy was not then at war with Germany.

The Austrian attack was launched from Trentino, where their territory extended far down on the flank of northern Italy. To rectify this dangerous defensive position was one of Italy's objects in the war. Austria held all the strategic points, all the higher mountain passes. Italy had to struggle up the mountains to attack; Austria could easily launch an assault from above. An attack from the southernmost Austrian positions struck far in the rear of the advanced Italian armies, and if greatly successful, would have a chance to bag a large part of them.

This was the purpose of the attack in May, when six hundred thousand Austrians began to battle. In three days all the Italian gains of a year were recovered. On the fourth day the Austrians crossed into Italy. Thirty thousand prisoners was one result of the first week's drive. The Italians made frantic efforts to hold the enemy, but disorganization led to the evacuation of strong positions without a battle. The overwhelming force at the place of attack broke

the resistance of a part of the Italian forces, and they were falling back upon their last defense line in the hills. The nearer the drive came to the open country of the valley, the more strongly the Austrian force could press the enemy. In two weeks the crisis came; if the advance was not stopped, the other Italian armies would be in peril. A last desperate defense was made, and made valiantly, but the danger was still great when the attack was checked. It was checked, not by the Italians, but by the Russians.

In the Allied war council held in Paris, when Verdun was in danger, it was agreed that Russia should be the first of the Allies to launch a general offensive; to be followed by the others as they were ready. There were reasons why such a plan should bring success to the Russian arms. Germany and Austria felt little fear of Russia, believing her to be beaten and out of the war for the year, as far as serious operations were concerned. It was known that Germany had withdrawn several hundred thousand men from the Russian front, and that Austria did likewise in preparation for her attack on Italy. But Russia was not beaten. Her numbers were inexhaustible, her morale still good, and her munitions had been replenished from Japan and America and from England by way of the Arctic Sea. Russia was to surprise the enemy.

The great Russian campaign of 1916 began on June 4th, when General Brusiloff attacked along a front of two hundred and fifty miles; the greatest single battle of the war up to that time. His assault was launched against the traditional weak point of the enemy lines, that part held by the Austrians. The front was very weakly held, there being no anticipation of attack. Beginning with an artillery bombardment rivaling that of the British, the Russians demolished the enemy front lines and moved forward in one immensely long line. Except for some miles in the center, the Austrian front was broken in many places by the irresist-

ible force of the Russian multitudes. In four days there was an advance of twenty miles and a capture of fifty thousand prisoners. Everywhere the Austrians fell back, almost in rout; even as they had fled in the first 1914 campaign. They abandoned their Italian offensive at once and rushed all reserves to the broken battle lines.

But the Russians were not to be stopped immediately. By June 17th they had captured eastern Bukowina, including Czernowitz, the capital; the northern wing of Brusiloff's army was making even greater progress. On June 20th the Russians claimed one hundred and seventy thousand prisoners. The miracle of Russian resurrection and the magnitude of 'Austrian disaster was revealed, and Allied hopes mounted as they had not previously done. The Russians pressed on, thirty and forty miles beyond their starting place. By the end of June German help was at hand. Hindenburg concentrated a force at the place of greatest danger, which was near the city of Kovel. The capture of this would deprive them of an important railway and would open to the Russians the way to Lemberg. The Russians were almost instantly checked, and although fighting of the severest character continued for weeks, they were not able to resume their advance at that point.

But along the southern end of the line the Russians continued their drive through July. By the end of the month they were far beyond Czernowitz, had occupied all of Bukówina, and were once more reaching out for their everlasting goal, the passes of the Carpathians. Nearly three hundred and fifty thousand prisoners and much of the equipment of the Austrian army had been captured. On August 10th Stanislaw was taken. This marked practically the end of Brusiloff's advance, although the struggle continued for weeks. In August the authority of Von Hindenburg was extended to include the Austro-Hungarian armies,



and by his defensive measures the Russians were held. Troops from every available source, including Turkish troops, were hurried to form a new barrier against the Slavs.

The final phase of the great campaign was a struggle for the lines of the Dniester and its branches. All through August and into September the Russians fought to pass over the rivers, but their ammunition was exhausted, and the battle was ended. Russia's last great campaign was over. Henceforth the Russians were to pass through the various stages of treachery, treason, revolution, counter revolution, fanaticism, disintegration and downfall.

The world may well pay a tribute to the Russians for their part in the great war against Germany and Germany's allies. Many times she came to the rescue of her hard-pressed allies, often at a terrible cost to herself. It is a question if the Russian attack in 1914—begun before Russia was really prepared to fight—did not save France. It is a certainty that her absorption of German energy in 1915 gave France a needed rest and permitted Britain to get ready. It is a probability that her Turkish campaign drained Turkey of the soldiers that might otherwise have succeeded in their attack on Suez. It is a certainty that Russia saved Italy from a serious defeat. In her last campaign she virtually sapped the offensive power of Austria-Hungary. The Dual Kingdom never thereafter undertook a serious campaign without German direction and assistance. But Russia could not save herself, could not endure to the end.

The Russian campaigns were always the most spectacular of the war: the imagination was caught by the battles involving such large numbers and by such great fluctuations of fortune; by the advances and retreats of fifty and one hundred miles, contrasting oddly with the deadlock in France and Belgium. The truth is that Germany never fortified herself

against the Russians as she did on the west front, relying on her better class of soldiers, on her generalship and her railroads to defeat the numerically superior foe. But all these would have proved ineffective, had she not also used a fourth weapon—treachery.

The Italians were no sooner relieved of the Austrian pressure than they began to reestablish themselves in their former defensive positions. All through June and July they fought their way back to the heights on the Trentino front. It was necessary to safeguard themselves there before they could carry out their part of the general allied offensive; it was closing and fastening their back door before they dared to venture out of their front door. By the end of July they were ready to begin an attack of their own.

One of the two objectives of the Italians was the city of Trieste, at the head of the Adriatic Sea. It was Austria's only commercial seaport, but the population was largely Italian, and Italy claimed it as hers by natural right. It was to capture Trieste that their principal campaign of the war was fought. Although the distance in miles was short, the way was difficult in the extreme. Rugged mountains, extending to the very edge of the coast, barred the road; and these mountains were defended with all the scientific resources of the Austrian army.

The Italians had expended their chief energies since their entry into war in approaching the defenses of Trieste. Their progress was by rods rather than miles, but it was real progress, owing to the nature of the ground. No other battle front approached the Italian in the variety of engineering skill called into play; hardly any war in history excelled it in the spectacular feats performed. Troops scaled precipices under fire, guns were hauled to mountain tops by main force, supplies were carried across chasms by cables suspended in mid-air, roads were constructed

through solid rock, tunnels were bored through mountains, soldiers fought among the high peaks in the dead of winter, fought in the heat of summer for the possession of a commanding height or a mountain pass, or a river ford.

Besides the mountain barrier, there was a river, the Isonzo, that the Italians had to cross. It is not a large river, but the rather deep gorge made it more than difficult to cross in the face of the enemy. On the east bank of the Isonzo some few miles from the sea was the fortress city of Gorizia, held by the Austrians. This was the immediate objective of the Italians, a necessary step to the winning of Trieste. All through 1915 and the first half of 1916, they had been creeping toward the fortress. Then, on August 7th, and suddenly, as it seemed to the world, they won the west bank of the river, which commanded the city, and on August 9th the Italians entered Gorizia. It was their first visible victory and created great enthusiasm throughout Italy while it removed the stigma of apparent inaction from the Italian armies.

But Gorizia was not Trieste nor was the way thither free. Very strong natural defenses still barred the advance and much remained to be done. During the rest of August the Italians prepared a new blow, an effort to push over the mountains to the lowlands near Trieste, where their superior numbers would be felt. In September they made the attempt and for days kept up the pressure. But the Italians were not to win such a victory in 1916. All their strength could not overcome the Austrian defense, aided as it was by the rugged mountains.

On August 27th Roumania declared war upon Austria-Hungary and Germany. Her advent into the conflict had been variously expected—longed for—given up, according to the changing fortunes of the Entente Allies. Roumania, like Italy, had a long

standing grievance against Austria-Hungary, in that more than three million Roumanians were subjects of the Dual Kingdom. Most of these were in the province of Transylvania, adjoining Roumania on her northwest frontier. There is no doubt but that she would have entered the war in 1915 had it not been for the Russian defeat of that year and the failure of the Dardanelles. As it was, Roumania hesitated where Italy plunged. In the autumn of 1915 she even seemed to lean toward the Central Powers, making a bargain whereby she supplied Germany with food and oil.

But Roumania's interests were all with the Entente; it was only through Austrian defeat that her aims could be attained. Diplomats on both sides endeavored to enlist her aid, until it came to be a saying that Roumania would not enter the war until six months before the end, when she would join the winning side.

To Roumania this time seemed to have come. The German victories of the year before had not been repeated, but instead, the Allies were winning on every front. The Russians had just won their great triumph, the Germans had lost at Verdun and were losing on the Somme; there was a large allied army at Salonica. The signal for Roumania's entry seems to have been the Italian capture of Gorizia. It is likely that the Roumanian leaders expected Italy to sweep on at once and engage all the Austrian reserves.

The strategic situation of Roumania was one of great strength, provided troops, munitions and generalship were equal to the occasion. Roughly, the shape of the country was that of a triangle, with enemies on two sides, since Bulgaria also was a foe. But the wide Danube River formed one boundary and a mountain range the other. The strongest assurance of success seemed to be the proximity of Russia. The latter supposedly could send in a half million or more troops, which, added to the six hundred thousand of Rou-

mania, seemed, to the world, to threaten the immediate defeat of the Central Powers.

Two courses of action were possible for Roumania in an offensive campaign. First: She could strike southward against the Bulgarians with the view of joining forces with the allied army at Salonica, thus cutting the Germanic Empire in two, and making the conquest of Bulgaria and Turkey certain. Roumania has been blamed for not following this course. But there were difficulties in it that seemed to bar the way. There was a doubt whether the Salonica army could render effective aid; and later events proved the wisdom of the doubt. The Danube with its one bridge would be a danger in the rear of her army and, besides, there were the Balkan mountains to cross.

Second: She could rest on the defensive along the southern frontier and attack on the northwest boundary; and this was the course Roumania followed. Self-interest called that way in that she would be occupying lands she claimed for her own. Instead of marching upon an enemy position, she would descend into a region almost undefended. The world had hardly read of the new combatant before it also read that the Roumanians had invaded Hungary. There were only small garrisons to oppose them, and in a very short time the Roumanian army had overrun a territory larger than that which the Germans held in France. It seemed the beginning of the end.

Germany was instantly besieged with clamors of help from Hungary, who had unexpectedly found an enemy at her back door. The German response was instantaneous. Mackensen went to Bulgaria to take charge of such forces as could be collected. In ten days he began an advance from the south, invading that portion of Roumania lying between the Danube and the Black Sea. He defeated two Roumanian corps left to defend the border, and menaced the heart of the country. Mackensen's advance threw the Rou-



manians into confusion. They expected Russian aid for this part of the line; Russian agents had promised a million soldiers, if necessary. But neither a million nor a half million Russians appeared to help Roumania. Revelations the following year showed that Sturmer, the Russian premier and a pro-German, had deliberately betrayed the Roumanians; had not only withheld the promised aid but had also retained much ammunition that England had consigned to Roumania by way of Russia. There was a Russian army sent, but the coöperation was worse than faint-hearted. It was necessary to withdraw a part of the troops from Transylvania. These measures succeeded in checking Mackensen's force and even drove it back somewhat. There were several battles on this front during September.

Meanwhile the Germans had prepared another blow. In less than a month after Roumania had declared war, a veteran German army came to the Transylvania region to deal with the invaders. It came so rapidly and unexpectedly that it seemed the Germans could raise armies by striking the ground. Here was seen again the valuable reserve army that had fought Russia, Serbia, France, and Britain. This time it had a new commander, Von Falkenhayn, who had been German chief of staff until supplanted by Hindenburg. On September 29th he defeated the Roumanians in a great battle at Hermannstadt. This decided the fate of the invasion almost at once. The Roumanians began to withdraw, pressed hard by the Germans. In two weeks all of Hungary was cleared of the invaders.

Such a sudden reversal of fortune brought consternation to the Allies and a frenzy of fear to the Roumanians. The king appealed to the Allies to aid him, and not permit his country to suffer the fate of Serbia. But France and Britain were almost helpless in the situation. They had no geographical connection, could not send direct aid. Only Russia was in

a position to help, and the failure to do so effectively is a dark chapter in the closing history of the Russian bureaucracy.

Roumania was now back inside her own frontiers, all hope of conquest gone, hoping only to withstand the enemy at the borders. They made one foray across the Danube early in October, but it was defeated. On October 21st, after a pause of some weeks, Mackensen resumed his advance in force, and quickly captured Constanza, on the Black Sea, Roumania's only good port. Fighting was now constant on both both fronts. Falkenhayn was pressing up toward the mountain passes, with less than one hundred miles separating his army from Mackensen's. From that time on, they were ever closing in upon the unfortunate Roumanians. The latter fought well, and it was not until November 20th that Falkenhayn succeeded in winning the passes.

But once over, his progress was rapid; his armies spread out fanwise, sweeping all before them. On November 24th the famous Iron Gate of the Danube was captured. About the same time that Falkenhayn surmounted the passes, Mackensen crossed the Danube, and the space between the two German armies lessened daily until they were in touch. On November 28th the Roumanians evacuated Bucharest, the capital, and on December 6th, one hundred days after the declaration of war, Mackensen's armies entered Bucharest, virtually ending the campaign.

The moral result of Germany's triumph over Roumania was felt by all the nations at war. Germany had rescued Hungary and Bulgaria from a new and sudden peril, had given her own people a brilliant victory to feed their hopes anew. She seemed equal to any situation. The military results were of consequence to none of the fighting nations except to Roumania herself; Germany was no better off than

before. Some profit was found in the large supplies of food captured.

The Allied army at Salonica was a puzzle during the year 1916, and in 1917 as well. It was an army without any purpose, apparently, except to bully Greece. Sent originally to help the Serbians, it had remained after its failure to do so; chiefly because of a well-founded suspicion that Germany herself had designs on Salonica. It was by now a polyglot army indeed, including British and French soldiers, African troops, the re-equipped Serbian army, a division of Russian troops and Greek volunteers; all under command of a French general, Sarrail. There was a place for this army in the Allies' strategic plan for the year. Its natural course was to force its way through the Bulgarian army and cut the railroad to Constantinople. It did begin an offensive in the summer of 1916, but it was only a sham offensive.

When Roumania entered the war, all the world looked to see the Salonica army spring into action, since its task was made easier by half. Bulgaria would soon be crushed as between two milestones—so the world thought. But the Roumanians exerted their strength elsewhere, and the Salonica army exerted no strength at all. In October and November some activity was seen, resulting in an advance by the Serbs, who regained a corner of their own land, including the city of Monastir.

The reason for the fatal inaction of this army lay in two conditions. One of these was a lack of munitions. At no time in its existence did Sarrail's army have enough guns and shells to begin a real battle. Whether the French and English could not spare the munitions, or whether some intrigue prevented action, is likely to continue in doubt until the leaders of the war write their memoirs.

The other cause for inaction was Greece. The Allies claimed a technical right to their occupancy of

Greek soil, on the ground that they were helping Greece fulfill her treaty obligations to Serbia. But it was a wretched situation for all concerned. The King and a considerable party were hostile to the Allies and eager for the success of the Germans. The popular leader, Venizelos, and a large majority of the Greek people were favorable to the Allies. But so long as the King retained control of the army, the Entente force did not dare entangle itself in a campaign, lest it be struck in the back.

Its 1916 campaign consisted largely in making demands upon Greece, designed to safeguard its position. The first of these was that the Greek army withdraw from the proximity of Salonica, then, successively, the dismantling of the navy, the surrender of the telegraph system, the expulsion of German agents and, finally, the demobilization of the whole Greek army. In all these engagements the Entente was victorious. During riots in November and December, French forces occupied Athens, but later they were withdrawn. Altogether, the Greek situation did not hold a ray of light for any one.

Of the other military events of the year, another Turkish attack on Suez is noted. It was as fruitless as the others had been. An event of some importance was a general revolt of the Arabs against Turkish overlordship. The Arabs were soon to be fighting beside the British. On the Tigris the British were quietly preparing a new expedition toward Bagdad; but this did not get under way until the following year.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ANOTHER WINTER OF DEADLOCK.

Of the military events of the year not mentioned under the various campaigns are several of note. In December Marshal Joffre retired from the command of the French armies. It was rumored, probably with

truth, that the office was tendered to Pétain and then to Foch, and that each declined to assume responsibility unless they were given a free hand and full control of the Allied armies. But the British were not yet willing to subordinate their army to French command. It was fortunate that Foch awaited his hour instead of accepting a divided command. It would have led to his dismissal at the crisis. Neville, a general almost unknown, took command, and Foch was given inactive duties for the time.

The aerial branches of all the armies had been making great progress. It was a never-ending contest among the belligerents to produce larger and swifter planes, to increase their carrying capacity, to lengthen their flights, to create tactics for squadrons and resource in individual airmen. Photography from the air was becoming a vital part of the preparations for battle. Dropping bombs on trains, roads, ammunition dumps, aérodromes, et cetera, was an everyday task.

Combats in the air were of daily occurrence. Early in the war two German aviators, Boelke and Immelmann, acquired fame by reason of the number of opponents they downed. Both of them met their death in the air. The French and British did not give individual prominence to their airmen to the extent that the Germans did, but the birdmen of both armies fully equalled the bravest and most skillful Teutons. From the time of the Somme fighting British planes gained increasing command of the air.

The Germans persisted in their air raids of English and French cities. Time after time the towns and cities of eastern and southern England were bombed from aéroplanes and Zeppelins. During April Zeppelins raided London on four successive nights. The night of September 23d, and again two nights later, twelve Zeppelins sailed over the British capital. These were the greatest air raids made up to that time.



The week of each month during which the moon made the landscape visible was the time chosen by the Germans for their raids. From a thing of peace and pleasure, of beauty and romance, it became an ally of the merciless Hun. There are persons in England, who, to their dying day, will never see the full moon without feeling an involuntary thrill of dread. During four years London and most of England spent their nights in darkness; all street lights out and dwelling lights shrouded. There was hardly a week but they heard the warning signals that sent them to bomb-proof shelters.

Much damage was done, but not so much as the Germans fancied. Millions of Germans believed that London had been laid in ruins, and they rejoiced. The most horrible incident of all the air raids was the killing of more than a score of children in one building. But the British were beginning to master even the Zeppelins. At first they seemed immune from attack, but in 1915 Lieutenant Robinson, in an *aéroplane*, destroyed the first Zeppelin, to the delight of all England. Late in 1916 there was hardly a raid in which one or more of the huge craft were not brought down, and before 1917 was over, the Germans abandoned the use of their gas bags and sent out only *aéroplanes*.

The Allied armies, especially the British, were increasing in strength constantly. The British had seven hundred thousand casualties to replace, but this and more was done. The Canadian army overseas had grown until it numbered a quarter million, with four hundred thousand enlistments. The Anzacs were keeping pace with Canada. Of more importance than its numbers was the fact that the British army, through its experience on the field of battle, was becoming a mighty weapon.

The greatest naval battle of modern times occurred in 1916. On the last day of May both the British and German main fleets were abroad, near the coast

of Denmark. Late in the day the advance guard of the British fleet sighted the enemy. Signaling the main fleet some miles away, Sir David Beatty, commander of the battle cruiser squadron, closed in with the intention of cutting off the enemy from his home port until the British dreadnaughts arrived. The cruisers of both sides began to exchange shots at a range of eleven miles, but they closed in to seven or eight miles, and later in the engagement the leading ships were only five miles apart. Hits were scored on each side and destroyers were sunk. Then the *Queen Mary*, a fine battle cruiser, sank so quick that the ship next in line sailed over the spot where she had floated a few moments previously. The main German fleet came in range, and Beatty's cruisers were outgunned. Only his skillful maneuvers saved him from a greater loss than he suffered.

The grand fleet of Britain was coming up, and the leading ships began to fire. The Germans now decided to break off the engagement, which they were able to do, since night was closing in and visibility was limited to four or five miles during the last hours of daylight. During the night the fleets got out of touch with each other, and when morning came the Germans were not to be seen.

The world was thunderstruck the day after the battle by a brief British bulletin stating the fact of the battle and announcing the loss of certain of their ships, aggregating about fifty thousand tons. No mention was made of a victory, and the world instantly assumed that the Germans had won a great naval triumph. In their haste, the Germans claimed as much. But disclosures later showed that they had lost fully as many ships as the British, and by reason of their false reports, suspicion was aroused that they were still concealing some of their losses.

The conditions under which the battle was fought were all in favor of the Germans. The British ships

were clearly outlined against the evening sky, while the Germans were shrouded in mist. Then, too, many of Britain's dreadnaughts did not fire a shot, arriving too late. This battle of Jutland, as it is known, was only an incident in the work of the British navy. But to the Germans it was a real defeat, since it represented a failure to break the British blockade. The British were left in control of the seas after the battle as fully as before, or even more so, in that a potential danger was removed. For the German ships were so badly battered that some of them were not repaired. The German high seas fleet did not venture into the North Sea again until a certain day more than two years later.

Five days after this battle, another British cruiser was sunk under circumstances that made its loss almost as memorable as the greater action. The *Hampshire*, carrying Lord Kitchener, his staff and other officials, was sunk off the west coast of Scotland on the night of June 5th. It is likely that a mine and not a submarine was the cause. Lord Kitchener was en route to Russia to confer on the military situation. He was the soldier of highest rank to meet death during the war.

The submarine warfare continued with increasing virulence. British measures to meet the undersea peril were also of growing effectiveness. From policy, the British made no announcements concerning the U-boats sunk. The German sailors saw their comrades leave port, and they knew that many of them were never heard of again. Nevertheless, the Germans sank more and more ships. They increased the numbers of their submarines and also the size and the cruising radius. March and April saw renewed bursts of activity, as did the autumn months. The total of sinkings by submarines for 1916 was more than twice as great as for 1915, yet their effect on the war thus far was the slightest, except to increase the cost of it.

As effective as several submarines were the few commerce raiders that managed to slip through the blockade. The most famous of these, the *Moerwe*, sank or captured fifteen vessels in a short time, and then returned safely to port.

In July, 1916, a German submarine suddenly appeared in American waters. It was not armed, however, but was a commercial vessel laden with goods of value. This craft, the *Deutschland*, made a second trip to America, after which it disappeared until the war was over. In the autumn, a fighting U-boat, the U-53, made a brief call at Newport and then went to sea again. The following day it sank several merchant ships east of Narragansett.

In summarizing the situation, the belligerents must have been somewhat bewildered by the way all their plans for 1916 had been set at naught. The Germans had begun the year with the intention of ending the war, or at least bringing it to a bargaining stage, by one more terrific blow. They had delivered the blow but it had been parried; and instead of her enemies asking for terms, they had made a united, and, to a degree, successful attack, and she had been upon the defensive for the first time. Roumania had fallen, but the military prospects of Germany were not brighter, nor those of France and Britain made worse thereby. On the contrary, Germany's enemies were growing stronger and peace was not in sight. Peace was Germany's aim. She had successively promised peace by the winter of 1914, peace by the summer of 1915, peace after Verdun; and peace was not yet come. She must make her people a new promise.

On their part, the Allies were equally confounded. While the military leaders had not expected to put an end to Germany's armies during 1916, they had fully expected to take a long step toward victory, had expected that, both geographically and in point of time, the end would be in sight. The year was now ended

and not one of the Allies had a clear balance of profit. And even more discouraging was the outlook for the coming year, which was more gloomy than it had been a year previous. Their greatest asset was a united campaign upon all fronts, but it was almost certain that they could not repeat in 1917 the plan they had followed in 1916. The leaders had information that was not made public, and it led them to fear that Russia was about to make a separate peace. Even if this were averted, France and England must have realized that Russia could not or would not absorb German energy and Austrian armies as in the past; they must have known of Russian disorganization and Russian treachery, of the plots of the pro-German premier, Sturmer, of the failure of Russian munitions and the cracking of Russian morale.

But if the outlook was not clear, neither was it hopeless. There was not the slightest disposition to give up. In a moral sense, their position had become clearer. It was now understood by the man in the street, as well as by the statesmen in council, that Germany's ambition was to control Europe; that German success would be a heavy blow to the democracy of the world and the freedom of nations. Although sinister work was even then going on in France in an attempt to undermine the morale of the people, yet the very peasants were enraged at the thought of peace without victory. The Englishman in the army or at home had no thought but to carry on, trusting to his leaders to find the road to victory.

England had gone to war in high confidence that her weight would instantly turn the scales; she had continued it after that illusion passed, continued in the face of blunders and disasters, fought without equipment, never doubting but that British armies could not possibly lose. And now England was in her most dangerous mood, that of dogged courage that would stick in spite of hope and fear, in spite of enemy success



and Allied failure, in spite of disaster real or threatened

The Allied watchword—attrition—seemed to have failed. At a time when Germany was pressed hard on all fronts, she still had enough reserves to detach an army of perhaps half a million and sent it hundreds of miles away to dispose of a new enemy. The Allies were close to the hard facts of the situation; they had not yet won the war and Germany might yet win it. If it came to a deadlock, Germany had the most pawns to lay upon the board. In the public press there was recognition of the fact that the war would almost certainly last beyond 1917; and the people bravely faced the knowledge that they could not hope for victory during the coming year.

The military leaders made their plans for a two or three years' campaign. The year 1917 would be one of hard fighting, in the plans of British, French, and Italian leaders. There were projects for campaigns in France and Flanders that might or might not drive the Germans back to the frontier. But there was no illusion, no real hope of immediate victory. Yet it was victory the Allies were determined to have; not a bargained truce nor a restoration of 1914 conditions, but a full and complete victory.

The political events of the winter were molded by the war needs and situation. In France the cabinet was reorganized, but it was to change yet again before the end. In Great Britain the Asquith cabinet fell in December. Of eight years' standing, it had taken on its war duties as it handled ordinary affairs; and when the war did not go well, the cabinet was patched and patched again. The offices were bandied about among Lloyd George, Carson, Churchill, Balfour, Law and others. Public opinion became hostile after the Gallipoli and Balkan failures. The disaster to Roumania was the last straw. The immediate cause of the change was the demand of Lloyd George that the

direction of the war be taken from the cabinet as a whole and given to a council of five members. After weeks of parley, Asquith resigned, and upon the failure of Bonar Law to take the reins, Lloyd George became the British premier. In a sense, the nation gave itself into his hands. He was the one leader who saw clearly and was also capable, who could lead the laboring classes as well as the financial and business powers.

One of the political measures of the Entente was an economical union, formed as an additional weapon against Germany. In the event that they would not be able to effect satisfactory peace terms, it was their intention to so control the world's business, especially the raw materials of manufacturing, that Germany would be left to stand alone, both in buying and selling. In answer to this, the German Chancellor declared that Germany would force trade equality when the time should come to make a peace treaty.

Another commercial measure was the issuance of a "black list" of neutral firms having trade connections with the enemy. This list contained the names of eighty-two United States firms, with whom British and French subjects were forbidden to deal.

The Allies were making good use of their control of the seas. They were buying larger and larger quantities of all supplies from all countries, but especially from the United States, since it was the one neutral country that could furnish them with such things as automobiles, guns, cotton, and meat. Britain's own factories had been turned largely to the making of war supplies. The industrial district of France was in ruins, and she was compelled to rely upon England for some of her needs. Half of the coal used by France came from English mines. Italy had to import nearly all her coal, and warnings came from the Italian government that unless large supplies of coal, steel, and other essentials of war were given,

they would be seriously handicapped on the field of battle.

Although peace was beyond the horizon, there was no lack of discussion of peace and peace terms in Entente, Teutonic and neutral countries. From the outbreak of war, pacifists in all lands advocated peace upon the basis that all belligerents alike were temporarily insane and that the soldiers should lay down their arms and go home. This view culminated in the so-called Ford Peace Party of 1915, that was to "have the boys out of the trenches by Christmas."

The enemy statesmen bombarded one another with long-distance speeches. If Bethmann-Hollweg declared in the Reichstag that only the enemy's demands obstructed peace, he was answered by Lloyd George or Balfour in the House of Commons, or by Briand in the French Senate. Neither side made their peace demands known in set terms; the Allies spoke of "restitution, reparation and guarantees," while Hindenburg boomed sonorous phrases concerning "a strong German peace," and the Kaiser promised his people "a peace commensurate with your sacrifices." The Pope and President Wilson each offered his services as mediator, but without success.

All the world was more or less surprised when, on December 12th, less than a week after the successful termination of the Roumanian campaign, the German Chancellor announced that Germany was ready to enter into peace negotiations. He communicated this fact to several neutral governments, asking them to forward his suggestion to the Entente Allies. He announced no terms, stating that these would be communicated only upon the enemy's acceptance of a parley. He let it be understood, however, that Germany had no intention of imposing the conditions of a conqueror, only saying that the situation held an appropriate basis for a lasting peace.

With one accord, the Allies, including Russia, de-

clined to entertain the suggestion. It was plain to all that there was no "appropriate basis" for peace; that such conditions as Germany would offer would not be acceptable; that neither side was beaten to the extent that it would accept the terms of the other. In their reply the Allies intimated as much, saying that negotiations were useless at that time. They took the occasion to restate their own terms in a very general way, which were understood to include the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, the restoration of Belgium, France, Serbia, Roumania, and Poland; indemnities for destruction, the satisfaction of Italian claims, changes in the Turkish Empire; in short, they held to the terms of a victor, whereas they had not yet won the victory. It was apparent that an agreement was hopeless.

In making the offer of peace, Germany had no hope of its being accepted; she had other ends in view. One of them was to keep her own people satisfied that they were fighting a ring of enemies that planned to destroy the Fatherland. The Allied refusal of peace was proclaimed as proof of this. A second aim was to influence neutrals, especially the United States. The latter had shown increasing signs of impatience with Germany's methods. If she could put herself in the attitude of wanting peace, and put her enemies in the position of wanting war, she might hope to win more sympathy in America. A third aim was to have an excuse for the inauguration of still more brutal methods of warfare on sea and land.

The greatest motive was to create dissension in the ranks of her enemies. It was evident that all peoples were more than weary of war. If Germany could instill a belief in the minds of the common people of Italy, France, Britain, and Russia that she was making a sincere offer of an honest peace, and that their own governments were pursuing a conqueror's course for a conqueror's purpose, then Germany would profit more by the refusal of her offer than by the acceptance

of it. If she could convince any party, socialist or otherwise, in enemy countries, that she was in earnest in offering peace, her purpose was won. And she did succeed. There is no doubt but that the Russian disintegration was due in part to Germany's peace offer. The Russian people wanted peace; they cared nothing for Trentino, Alsace, submarines, embargoes, indemnities, and they had lost hope of getting Constantinople. Seeing the hand of peace, certain elements began a campaign to end the war. Several revolutions were to come and go before this element emerged from the confusion and grasped the supreme power; but it came in time. By a soft word Germany disposed of one of her three chief enemies. Italy, too, was to suffer as a direct result of Germany's peace offensive.

There were results in every country from the peace move. It gave support to those who believed that neither side could win a full victory and that it was better to stop before exhaustion. This was the dangerous phase of the peace movement in France and Britain. It was the generally accepted view in America at this time, where prominent men declared that it was a pity to continue when neither side could win.

If a single munition factory lessened its output with the idea that peace was near—Germany had won a victory. If the soldiers in the trenches, the recruits in training, the workers in the mills and mines, the seamen who braved the torpedoes, were filled in any degree with a longing for peace at any price, or with dissatisfaction with their government, Germany had won the equivalent of a campaign.

Germany's proposal was followed shortly by one from President Wilson, also suggesting peace negotiations. Mr. Wilson was careful to say that his note was not caused nor influenced by the German proposal. He suggested that all nations state their war aims clearly as a first step toward peace. One phrase of



his note aroused much criticism from the Entente; he said that both sides were fighting for substantially the same aims. This brought forth some bitter comment in France and Britain, where the people felt that they were fighting for liberty—America's and the world's as well as their own. About a month later, in an address in the Senate, Mr. Wilson referred to his proposal, saying that it implied a "peace without victory," meaning that it was not desirable that one side should prevail and impose terms upon the other. This met with even less favor in Europe.

And now with her peace trap set, Germany made her military plans. Like the Entente leaders, her generals were aware that the war would almost certainly continue into 1918, if not longer, and they made their plans accordingly. No Verdun smash was scheduled for the coming year. Germany could not afford another defeat like that. Not even a new sweep into Russia was in prospect. Germany had other means of winning there; she meant to make the Russians fight her battles.

It was certain that Britain would continue her offensive begun on the Somme, that Germany would have to defend her lines against the utmost strength of the British armies. This, the general staff undertook to do; planning for the first time a defensive campaign upon all the main fronts, with the full purpose of resuming the offensive when other plans matured.

But Germany was not to be entirely on the defensive; instead she planned a deadly blow at her chief enemy—England. She had determined to begin an increased submarine warfare without any restrictions whatever, in the hope of compelling Britain to sue for peace.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN OF 1917.

At the beginning of the war Germany had less than fifty submarines; England twice as many. But British submarines seldom had a target, while the German boats had the commerce of the world to prey upon. Submarines soon became synonymous with Germany.

The sinking of the *Lusitania* marked the dividing line between the strictly naval use of the submarine and its course of murder and piracy. This ghastly event burst so unexpectedly upon the world as to forever fix it as one of the great crimes of history. It brought the United States into the war, and, in a very real sense, it brought her into the war immediately. There was a loud demand for instant warfare on the part of many Americans, led by Theodore Roosevelt. But the President felt that the majority of the people did not desire war, and he chose to attain his ends by peaceful means. And then began the long series of notes that often excited derision, but which served a great purpose, that of clearly defining the issue between the United States and Germany.

The United States government in its notes denounced the sinking of merchant and passenger ships, unless the lives of crew and passengers should be safeguarded. This was in effect to deny to the submarine the right to sink such vessels, since it could not care for a thousand or even a hundred people. Germany's replies were evasive, seeking to lay the blame upon England's blockade. After months of controversy the *Lusitania* question seemed to be on the point of settlement, when early in 1916, the French steamer *Sussex* was torpedoed and several Americans killed. The vessel was not sunk, and investigation proved that a German torpedo had struck her. And now the ques-

tion was thrown open again. Mr. Wilson very sharply asked the intentions of the German government, warning it that the United States would be compelled to sever relations if submarines continued to sink unarmed ships. In course of time a promise was forthcoming that Germany would sink no more ships without warning and without aiding passengers and crew to escape. The danger of war seemed averted and the success of Mr. Wilson's policy was the deciding factor in the presidential campaign of 1916. "He kept us out of war" was the slogan that won the election.

The American elections were anxiously awaited by the German leaders. There was a strong party in Germany that from the very first favored an indiscriminate submarine warfare. The government—Kaiser—Chancellor—generals—was in favor of it, too, to the extent of rushing the construction of new U-boats by the score, meanwhile feeling the pulse of the world to decide for or against the new campaign. The one neutral nation the German leaders watched was the United States, as the only remaining nation whose friendship or hostility mattered. The American wrath over the *Lusitania* led to the suppression of the party of frightfulness headed by Tirpitz, for the time. The long controversy seemed, to Germany, to align Americans definitely on the side of peace, and the result of the election confirmed their notion that America would not fight. They saw the reelection of a president who was apparently most unwilling to lead the nation into war, whose success was undoubtedly due to that very fact.

Whether Germany might have withheld her hand under different circumstances is not known, but Mr. Wilson's reelection seemed to be the signal for a renewed outburst of undersea activity. December, 1916, and January, 1917, saw a sudden gain in sinkings, nearly four hundred thousand tons of shipping being destroyed each month. The Germans were trying out

their new U-boats. On the last day of January, Bernstorff, the German ambassador, handed to the State Department at Washington a note announcing that on the following day the Germans would inaugurate a new policy concerning submarines. A zone was demarked embracing all the water around the British Isle, the entire coast of France and all of the Mediterranean except a channel leading to Greece. Within this zone all enemy ships of any status, and all neutral vessels suspected of carrying contraband, would be sunk without warning.

Here was no time for parley. Germany had plunged. All regard for the lives of noncombatants was put aside, all the valuable ships of friendly nations were consigned to destruction, all her promises to President Wilson were broken in the deliberate desire to win the war by any means. It was not a suddenly adopted policy. The Germans had long considered it, but had never possessed the resources in U-boats to carry it out until this time. It was definitely decided upon many weeks before it actually began, and agents the world over were notified, and were instructed not to announce it until January 31st.

In America, the announcement came as a blow. It was apparent that war would almost surely follow. Germany had purposely left no time for diplomatic exchanges. Mr. Wilson's action was prompt; he at once severed relations, as he had warned Bernstorff he would do. On February 3d, he addressed a joint assembly of Congress announcing his action and saying that the course of events would await actual hostility—"an overt act"—on the part of Germany, which he prayed would not come.

Germany's submarine policy was hailed by the Allies as a last desperate gambler's cast, as a virtual admission of defeat on land. This was only partly true; Germany's situation was gloomy, but not as bad as her enemies saw it. The Kaiser had doubtless given

up hope of an immediate peace with Russia, but his agents promised to attain the same end during that present year. Meanwhile his generals needed time for their plans to mature—plans that would startle the world a year hence. The German army was bidden to hold on until the submarine won the war.

In beginning a ruthless sea policy Germany knew she would bring down upon herself the enmity of the remaining nations of the world, but all this cast in the scales did not balance the expected gains. Nowhere in Europe was there a possible new enemy; Holland and Denmark dared not move, Spain was negligible, Norway and Sweden would not fight. Of the great nations, only the United States could be expected to take any action. And Germany did not fear the United States. She was so confident of an early victory that she discounted any move by America. Even if the war were to continue into the following year, Germany saw no reason to fear America. The American navy was known to be first-class, but it could hardly add to the admitted supremacy of Britain's sea power on the ocean surface, and Germany disdained the American army. It was known to number less than forty thousand trained men, after the necessary forces for the Philippines, Mexican border, forts, etc., were subtracted. And this was less than one army corps of the hundred Germany possessed. It was inconceivable that America could raise an effective army. She had no officers save for the small army, and an army without officers is a mob. Germany had one hundred and fifty thousand officers, and she had none too many. Her generals promised the statesmen that they could safely proceed without any misgiving as to America.

The one impelling reason for Germany's submarine campaign was Great Britain. Germany looked over the war map, and was conscious that she had beaten her enemies time after time, and yet she was unable



to enforce peace because of Britain. It was Britain who kept the war going; who backed Italy and Russia, who supplied the guns and shells for each new campaign; who brought from abroad the vital supplies—food, machines, horses, and mules. It was Britain who financed every one of her enemies. Germany was confident that France could not stand a month without Britain. And Britain was growing ever stronger; her soldiers, whom Germany had scorned as she now scorned the Americans, had now become a mighty army, and Germany saw before her a score of battles as terrible as the Somme had been, in which she would have to face the might of the British army. If only Britain could be beaten the game was won, and, in spite of Britain's insular position, Germany believed she could be beaten.

It was a well-known fact that England depended on her ships for the necessities of life. She was a great manufacturing nation, but the bulk of the materials for her workmen came from abroad, from South Africa, from India, Egypt, China, from South America, from the United States, and Canada. And more vital than materials for mills was food. Only a fraction of the food needed for the millions in the British Isles was grown at home; three-fourths of it came from abroad; meat from Chicago; wheat from Canada, Argentine, and Australia; sugar from the West and East Indies. The British laborer's meals came from the ends of the earth, and they came by ship.

It was obvious that if Germany could shut her enemy off from the world, she would be compelled to ask for mercy; she could not live three months on the products of her own soil. Germany aimed to isolate her with submarines and raiders. Many a ship laden with wheat or sugar or meat had been sunk almost within sight of port. But thus far her submarines had been limited in number, and also limited by the

moral opinion of the world. To throw off this moral restraint was a terrible thing; to plunge into the future bearing the condemnation of the world was not inviting. But Germany saw supreme power ahead, saw a new day when there would be no mighty British Empire to thwart her, and she took the plunge with the full hope of conquering absolutely her one great enemy.

She would starve Britain into submission, starve her into giving up her navy, starve her into helplessness and ruin.

In deciding to include neutral as well as enemy vessels in her ruthless destruction, Germany meant to regain some of the heavy loss caused by her forced absence from the world's commercial mark. Dutch, Norwegian, and American ships had helped themselves to the trade of Germany's former customers, and in sinking vessels of these and other nations she would not only destroy cargoes bound for England or France, but would also destroy the shipping of rival nations. She could attain commercial supremacy by the simple, if terrible, means of destroying the ships of all other nations.

And now the stage was set for the last act but two of the great war, a phase that was to excel, if possible, all others in malice and wrath and bitterness, in cruelty, dishonor—and failure. Out into the dark waters Germany sent her boats, into the North Sea, the Irish Sea, the broad Atlantic, the Bay of Biscay, all along the channels of shipping, while from the Adriatic ports, German and Austrian submarines gathered near every port of France, Italy, and Egypt. And now let every mariner be wary, for he knows not what instant his boat may feel the shock of a shell or the rending burst of a torpedo! Let him sail by night with all lights shrouded, let him speed by day with eyes keen for signs of the lurking assassin. Let not women and children look to German sailors for mercy, for they

have cast mercy behind them. Let them rather throw themselves into the sea.

The success of the submarines was instantly seen in the tremendous number of ships that were sent to the bottom. The sinkings jumped at once in a way that promised to fulfill the boast of the Germans that they would sink a million tons a month; that promised almost to fulfill Tirpitz's boast that he would bring England to her knees in three months. From three to ten ships were sunk every day. The seriousness of this is realized when it is remembered that two-thirds or more of these ships were large vessels, many of them over five thousand tons gross. Let those who live on or visit the seacoast gaze upon a five-thousand-ton vessel; larger than the steamer *Governor* that enters all the Pacific ports, or one of the West Indies boats sailing from New York, and then reflect that the equivalent of three thousand of such ships was sunk during the war.

During the first eighteen days of February, 1917, one hundred and thirty-four ships were sent to the bottom; thirty-one of these were sailing vessels, fourteen were small, and forty-seven large steamships. This is compared with the same period in January when sixty-seven ships, or exactly half, were sunk. And January was a month of big harvest for U-boats. For the first quarter of 1917, ships with a tonnage of 1,619,373 were sunk, or more than three times as much as for the same period of 1916. The second quarter of 1917, 2,236,934 tons were destroyed. This was the high period of all the war. The loss of the ships was not so serious as the loss of cargo space. If the Allies could have replaced all the ships lost, they could have faced the destruction with calmness. But ships, meaning cargo space, meaning transportation, meaning vital supplies, were badly needed. And the ships were going down almost hourly. A cargo of sugar, a shipload of grain from Argentina, a liner

deep laden with munitions, all lost in one day meant not only the loss of those ships and their cargoes, but the loss of transportation for future loads. The world anxiously watched for the daily news of submarines, for the world was vitally interested. It was life and death to the European countries; for the first time in hundreds of years all Europe was hungry. And the ships carrying food were being sunk, three yesterday, eight to-day—how many to-morrow? Belgium was hungrier, for twelve relief ships carrying food from America were sunk during February, March, and April. The Germans were hungry—they would bring hunger to the rest of the world. Holland was feeling the pinch of hunger, and six of her ships laden with grain had just been sunk in the North Sea. Norway was hungry, and she was losing ships by the hundred. France was hungry, and her food supply from America was being cut off, a shipload to-day, another to-morrow. Italy, too, was hungry, and ships were becoming scarcer every week. All of Europe was hungry and likely to be hungrier. Forgotten were the wants of other days of fine clothes, of honors, the luxuries that had seemed so necessary—the world was hungry.

Would Britain be hungry, too? There lay the crux of the matter. If Germany could bring hunger, severe hunger, to Britain, her war was won. And the U-boats, lynx-eyed, swarmed in the waters around Britain sinking every ship that they could reach. They were more and more successful as the weeks went by. The first week in March twenty-three British ships alone were sunk, the last week in March it was twenty-five, the first week in April it mounted to thirty-one. Then in the third week in April, the enormous number of fifty-five British ships were sunk—a vessel destroyed every three hours. Forty of these were large steamers. Here was enough shipping to supply an army, almost. The following weeks, de-

struction was nearly as great, fifty-one vessels, while the third week they numbered forty-six. During this three weeks' period there were one hundred and fifty-two British vessels and approximately ninety ships of other nations sunk—two hundred and forty in round numbers—more than eleven daily, a ship sunk almost every two hours.

Would Britain be hungry? It appeared so. Britain cut down her food allowance, tightened her belt, gave up luxuries, denied herself unnecessary imports that all available cargo space might be used for essentials. A public food controller was named, and Britons surrendered their personal liberty to the extent of obeying the food regulations. Meanwhile they kept a brave, if stern, face toward the enemy. The soldiers on the firing line were fed, all the workers were fed. No one in Britain was actually hungry. But the surplus stores of food were watched. Measures to feed her population and at the same time save shipping were taken. Every available bit of land was put under cultivation. Estates that had been carefully kept for generations, open parks, commons—all land was used to grow food.

In the meantime the British and French navies, and after May, the American navy, were fighting the submarines, looking for them day and night. They found many a U-boat that then and there ended its career. The British navy was resourceful in its difficult work. It made huge nets that extended for miles; many a diver was entangled in them. They laid traps and captured some of the enemy, submarine and crew. One hundred thousand British seamen, fishermen, trawlers, longshormen, were enlisted in special submarine work. These men sailed the North Sea in small vessels, armed with small rapid-fire guns. They laid the nets and mine fields, made the traps, performed a score of tasks. A dangerous but successful means of combating the hidden enemy was to fit out a vessel,



disguised as a merchant ship. These vessels cruised about until attacked by a submarine. A "panic crew" took to the boats, and then the enemy, to save the expensive torpedoes, approached to board the "abandoned" ship. When they were close enough a concealed crew opened fire upon the U-boat, and usually it was the end of that diver. But the most successful means of combating the enemy were the swift destroyers. Through their intelligence system, the English navy usually knew how many submarines were out, and about where they were. The destroyers traversed hundreds of miles of water daily, while aëroplanes and balloons watched for the dark spots in the water. It was a battle royal such as the British navy in its centuries of activity had never before experienced.

As a preventive measure, the incoming and outgoing ships were arranged in convoys, as far as the number of destroyers would permit. The value of the convoy system is shown in the fact that it was only rarely that a transport was sunk. The British could not convoy all their merchant ships because they lacked destroyers. They had five thousand vessels under naval command, but the vast majority were small vessels unfitted for convoy duty upon the stormy Atlantic. Another means of combating U-boats was by raiding their bases. Many times the ports of Belgium, occupied by the Germans, were bombarded from sea and air, and often with good effect. But it was not possible to prevent entirely the activity of U-boats.

The submarines continued their deadly work. Week by week the sinkings continued, while the German leaders awarded iron crosses to the commanders and continued to proclaim the success of the policy. A number of war vessels, including French and British battleships, fell victim to the U-boats. Nothing escaped that came within their power. It was the German's particular delight to destroy a British fishing

boat fifty miles from land, and set the crew adrift, if they did not wantonly sink them with their ship. They attacked and sometimes sank hospital ships. The *Astoria* was sunk on March 20th with a loss of seventy people, mostly nurses. More than half of the ships sunk were British. The English merchant marine in 1914 totaled about twenty million tons, gross. More than nine millions were sunk during the war. Norway lost eight hundred and thirty-one vessels with a tonnage of one and one-quarter millions, and several hundred sailors. In April alone seventy-five Norwegian ships were lost and one hundred sailors drowned. More than six thousand English ships, including fishing vessels, were sunk, and the loss of lives, excluding naval losses, was over fifteen thousand. One U-boat is said to have sunk one hundred and twenty-six vessels.

The high month of sinkings was April; thereafter they began to decline. But still the destruction continued faster than the construction of new ships, and the shortage of cargo space became constantly greater, and the specter of hunger ever more alarming. But after the world's harvest of 1917 the crisis was past. The first week of November only one large British vessel was sunk. It was about this time that certain American newspapers, all controlled by one publisher, called upon America "to wake up to the fact that England was losing the war and Germany winning it by means of her submarines; that the English navy had utterly failed to handle the situation; that Britain was concealing the facts of the war."

The destruction lessened as the number of U-boats diminished. In September and October there was a serious mutiny of German seamen against the submarine service. It had become so deadly that they rebelled against it. Scores of U-boats never went back to port, and the loss of a submarine usually meant the death of all her crew, an especially terrible death.

Nearly six thousand German sailors were lost in the U-boat campaign, which explains the mutiny.

What will history's verdict be upon the submarine campaign? It did not help Germany; it destroyed her power. It did not destroy the military or naval power of Great Britain or the Allies; it did not even affect them materially. It did not lessen in the slightest degree the British blockade, nor did it weaken the Allied armies in France and Belgium, either in spirit or in supplies. There was not a German individual whom it helped; not a phase of Germany's campaign that it bettered. It was a terrible failure for Germany. And finally brought the United States into the war.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR.

In 1914 only alarmists foresaw American participation in the war, and they foresaw it only because they were alarmists. In the minds of the people there was no reason for going to war over the quarrels of European nations. On the contrary, the general feeling was one of thankfulness that we were not involved. All the years of preparedness had not served to save Europe from catastrophe, and Americans rejoiced in their own unpreparedness. There was a general outburst of rejoicing and congratulation over our democratic institutions that made a war of aggression impossible, and over our geographical situation that made a war of defense unnecessary. There was a proud comparison of our situation with that of unfortunate Europe; there was condemnation of secret diplomacy, of kings and emperors, of autocracy and militarism. The general feeling was that Europe had gone mad. It seemed the height of imbecility for the nations to pour out their blood, to waste their wealth and sacrifice their future in a gigantic war. There was sym-

pathy for Belgium as an innocent victim, there was hope and fear for France, there was a thrill for Great Britain on the part of those with British blood in their veins. There was almost unanimous condemnation for Germany. She seemed a little more mad than the other nations, and we assumed her early defeat.

This state of mind lingered with different persons for varying lengths of time. To the millions of the nation there came only slowly the understanding that neither America nor any other democratic nation could live in peace and safety with Germany. In some, the recognition did not come until we were actually at war. But with others there was early disillusionment. To men of keen mind, and of training in public affairs—men whom Theodore Roosevelt and President Wilson typified—the German atrocities and German submarine policy foreshadowed a very grave future for the world and for the country. To them the sinking of the *Lusitania* was a more terrible event than was implied in the immediate consequences, the death of hundreds of innocent people. It made further destruction and death, and finally war, for our country almost certain. The past and the future were sharply divided by that event of the 7th of May, 1915. It marked the end of the era in which America could live by herself; it promised to thrust her into the whirlpool of international rivalry. The actions of the two leaders were typical of two factions of the nation: Roosevelt and a minority of the people were in favor of immediate war; Wilson and a great majority were for peace, if it were possible to maintain peace.

But if America still desired peace the sinking of the *Lusitania* was the cause of a long step toward war, in the minds of even the most pacific Americans. It brought out clearly the justice of the Entente Allies' cause; it demonstrated that America was no longer isolated from European quarrels, nor unconcerned with world events. From that day the feeling against



Germany grew. A foundation had been laid upon which every succeeding event was cemented, raising an ever higher tower of wrath against Germany. But America continued to favor peace until peace could no longer be maintained with honor, until war was thrust upon her.

It was not long before it became known that the murder of Americans on the *Lusitania* was not the only hostile act, nor the first, that Germany had committed against the United States. The list of her offenses and crimes is a long one. Years before the war she prepared for the success of her armies and her navy by sending spies to every important country in the world. These agents established themselves, became well-known and respected citizens of long standing. Sometimes they were her consular agents or members of German mercantile firms, often they were apparently anything but German. America received her share of these paid servants of Wilhelmstrasse. New York was infested with them, Washington gave them work and a free hand. They were bound together in an organization as rigid and mandatory as only the Prussians could command. Some of these agents confined their activities to the simplest work of a spy, that of obtaining information. Before the war there was little attempt to veil any of the United States governmental affairs in secrecy, and as a consequence, the German foreign office knew much more about our affairs than did the average citizen. Other agents were primed for particular tasks, and perhaps bided their time for months and years. Still another class called for special talent, that of spreading propaganda. To one man would be given publicity work of the newspapers, another was sent to organize peace societies, a persuasive gentleman appeared in Arizona or Montana as an I. W. W. leader. Especially skilled men went to Mexico to create trouble for the United States. "Honest humanitarians" worked with Irish agitators



to fan the flame of hatred against England. Among their projects was one to incite a negro uprising in our Southern States, but they had not the slightest success, unless the East St. Louis riot in 1917 was of their doing.

The great aim of the Germans in the publicity phases of their work was to win the support of the German-Americans. There were several millions of German-born citizens, many more millions whose parents were German-born. Germany counted heavily upon the support of these people; to her all Germans owed their first duty to the Fatherland. It was hoped and believed that the Germanic population would prevent any hostile acts by the United States, or, in the event of war, they would cripple the power of the government by their united influence. The chief means used to win the support of German-Americans was through the press. Well placed, intelligent agents were able to control a large number of unsuspecting, well meaning newspapers, both German and English. The boldest, and, for a time, the most successful agency of the German cause, was a weekly periodical that began its career in New York City simultaneously with the war. This paper invested itself with all the atmosphere and dignity of the highest plane of Americanism and proceeded to demand for Germany and her allies the full support of Americans; it ventured to dictate to the government the course of action whereby Britain should be shorn of power; it lauded the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and tried to prove that it was a British crime; it sneered at the American government and praised the forbearance and humanity of Germany's statesmen. For a year or so it fairly carried German-American opinion with it. But, like most German agencies, it lacked the important virtues, truth and justice.

The mythical five hundred thousand German reservists that a certain German official informed Mr. Ger-

ard were to throttle America, never appeared to grace the five hundred thousand lamp-posts that awaited them. But the actual crimes committed in Germany's behalf were of no small number. The American secret service performed some wonderful feats of detection and prevention of German acts, among others the prevention of the blowing up of the Welland Canal, of the destruction of vessels by means of bombs placed in holds; the saving of many factories devoted to war supplies. Its work in detecting the secret codes of spies was especially valuable. It was not able to prevent all the crimes of the enemy's agents. A number of powder mills were destroyed under circumstances that left no doubt as to the cause. The United States agents traced these events straight to the German embassy and to the machinations of Von Papen and Boy-Ed, its naval and military attachés. These officers were withdrawn in December, 1915, at America's request.

These acts soon made clear to the leaders of the nation what manner of friend was Germany, but to the country at large, not so well informed, events seemed to move in the path of peace. Reference has been made in the previous chapter to the series of notes that followed the *Lusitania* horror, and to the renewed sharpness of the American attitude following the attack on the *Sussex*. Throughout all this time the President was earnestly striving to maintain peace, and at the same time to restrain Germany from acts that would make war inevitable. On Germany's part, all her replies and proposals, though seemingly friendly and diplomatically proper, were but a mockery. She was simply biding her time, waiting until events should make it desirable to throw off the mask.

As soon as it became even remotely possible that America might be drawn into war there came a demand that America prepare, voiced by Colonel Roosevelt and by thousands of other leading citizens, who

were alarmed at the unprepared condition of the country. The war had assumed such tremendous proportions that anything seemed possible, even the invasion of America. They saw the smallness of our army, only a few thousand men in addition to the requirements of coast defenses, army posts, the Philippines and the Mexican border. The periodicals of the country were flooded with "histories" of the descent of a victorious Germany upon a defenseless America with accounts of the destruction or ransom of New York, Philadelphia, and other cities. A pro-German weekly, not to be outdone, published a history of the conquest of America by England and Japan.

The call for preparedness was emphasized by the events of 1916. Mexico had threatened trouble for several years. Border raids, the murder of Americans in Mexico, the destruction or looting of property, aroused a demand that some action be taken. Early in 1916, the bandit leader, Villa, made a raid in Columbus, New Mexico, killing some few citizens and soldiers. Although a decision was made almost at once to send a United States force to capture Villa, it was weeks before a detachment under General Pershing got under way. The entire National Guard was called out for service upon the Mexican border, and it was an even longer time before they were mobilized. They lacked most of the equipment an army should have and the troops were insufficiently trained.

As a result of the Mexican campaign a sentiment arose in favor of discarding the National Guard as a military force, and organizing a larger standing army, or at least, a trained reserve army. Secretary of War Garrison threw his weight in favor of a new plan of defense, and when it failed to win support he resigned and was succeeded by Newton D. Baker. But preparedness was in the air and would not be denied. It is true that there was a strong sentiment against any sort of preparation for war. Mr. Bryan was the spokesman

of the Americans holding this view. His declaration that "a million soldiers would spring to arms overnight in case of need" destroyed much of his reputation for sagacity. But although Mr. Roosevelt had aroused the people to the needs and perils of the day, nothing practical was done during 1916. The navy fared better than the army in that a three-year program was adopted that provided for a great increase in war-ships.

The Germans were interested observers of American politics, and especially of the Mexican campaign. Her agents were told to make even greater efforts to stir up Mexico against the United States, and thus engage all of America's military energy. For Germany's submarine decision depended upon the probability of America's intervention. And the showing of the American army seemed, to Germany, to preclude not only the probability but the possibility of any effective opposition. It was an accepted axiom that only trained troops were of avail on a modern battlefield, and except for the small standing army, America had no trained troops, and could not possibly raise and train an army of sufficient size in time to play a vital part in a war with Germany—so her leaders thought. And even granted that America could raise an army, it could not be transported across the Atlantic. The submarines would prevent that. But the Germans, in stirring up the Mexican trouble for Uncle Sam, really did him a friendly service in calling his attention to the condition of his army. They also provided an able general with valuable experience in handling troops in an actual campaign.

The political campaign of 1916 was fought mainly on the question of preparedness and of Mr. Wilson's foreign policy. The Republicans declared in favor of a more aggressive attitude. It is noteworthy that the Eastern States, where the people had a personal contact with some phase of the war, voted for Mr.

Hughes, while the West and South were almost solid for Mr. Wilson—and peace. The interpretation the Germans put upon the the result of the election has been noted. From this time onward America drifted and Germany steered toward war. The submarine campaign had been definitely decided upon and the date set, but it was kept a secret until the last minute. Germany's agents took final measures to hamper the government in case of war. Not content with financing bandits in Mexico, the German foreign minister, in a message that was intercepted by the United States secret service, instructed the German ambassador to Mexico to propose an alliance, in which Mexico should receive, as a reward, such parts of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona as she desired. It was further ordered that Mexico should make efforts to persuade Japan to join the alliance. America did not know whether to be more amazed at the audacity of this plan or amused at the ignorance of a German minister. Another message intercepted was one from Ambassador Bernstorff requesting permission to use fifty thousand dollars to influence Congress for peace in "ways you know of." This was not made public until after Herr von Bernstorff's departure. That there was a reality in Germany's influence in Mexico and elsewhere is shown in a proposal received February 12, 1917, from Carranza, in which he proposed, in the name of peace, an embargo on the shipment of munitions to Europe.

And now, at an hour when the world was desperate with war weariness, when nations were cracking under the strain, when influential public opinion in America pronounced the war a deadlock, and called for peace in the name of humanity, Germany shot her submarine bolt. Like lightning from a clear sky the war fell upon America, when on January 31, 1917, Bernstorff announced that as a "consequence of a 'new situation'" his government would, on the following day, begin a



policy of unrestricted submarine warfare." In a note from his government it was "hoped that the United States would view this measure with a sympathetic eye."

America was too stunned for a day to realize all that was implied. It repelled with scorn Germany's offer to allow, under certain conditions, one American ship each week to sail to England. The nation accepted the decision of the President to break off relations with Germany. It heard with gladness the ringing declaration of rights in the President's address to Congress on February 3d, and it especially noted his words "an overt act" and grimly set itself to wait for it.

The "overt act" was not long in coming. On the night of February 25th the Cunard liner, *Lucania*, was torpedoed and sunk. The crew and passengers were forced to take to open boats in a rough sea and bitter weather; twelve passengers, including two American women, died from exposure. The Germans had carried out their threat. This was but one of several daily sinkings in which lives were sacrificed. The American press and people accepted the event as a guarantee of war. But it was not practical to declare war on the instant. The Congress then in session would automatically expire in a week, and it was necessary to wait until a new Congress came in. However, on the day following the sinking of the *Lucania*, the President asked Congress to empower him to arm ships for defense against submarines.

Not one of the transatlantic liners sailing under the American flag had left port since the beginning of unrestricted sinkings. Ships that were ready to sail were held; ships a day or two out were called back. But this was playing Germany's game. It was unthinkable that the American flag should be driven from the seas. The act to arm merchant ships took its course through Congress, but when it came before the

Senate for discussion its passage was prevented by a group of "willful senators" who took advantage of the Senate rules of unlimited debate to use the last remaining hours of the session in speeches against the measure. Seventy-five senators signed a statement to the fact that they would have voted for it if they had been permitted to do so.

But the ships were armed nevertheless. Advantage was taken of an old law permitting ships to defend themselves against pirates; and early in March the steamship *St. Louis* sailed from New York with naval gun crews, the first American liner to sail. However, the first American ship to reach Europe after February 1st, was the *Rochester*, which was on the seas at the time.

More American lives were lost. American ships were sunk without warning. But the loss of American lives on the *Lucania* was accepted as final proof of Germany's intention. President Wilson decided upon war. Immediately after his second inauguration he issued a call for Congress to meet in special session on April 16th. The date was later changed to April 2d. When the day came he appeared before a joint session of Congress and delivered a historic address, reciting the indignities and crimes of the German government, and denouncing the aims of German autocracy. He called for a declaration that a state of war already existed by reason of acts committed against the United States. The measure was put through in four days: the Senate having adopted rules that prevented La Follette, Stone, or any other senator willfully inclined, from obstructing it. Six senators and about seventy-five representatives voted against war; but on April 6th the House finally passed the measure and it immediately received the signature of the President. The United States was at war. America, who had invented the submarine, was at war with an enemy who had made the greatest development of the underwater

craft; America, who had invented the machine gun, was going to war with the greatest exponent of the weapon; America was beginning a conflict in which air craft was a vital necessity, but America, the inventor of the aëroplane, had hardly a war machine of the air in commission.

The United States pledged its full strength to the cause of democracy. It pledged its military and naval forces to the utter defeat of the enemy. With one accord the people of the East, the West, the North, the South felt the significance of America's entry into the war, and with tremendous enthusiasm they set themselves at the service of the nation. The German-American cities of St. Louis and Cincinnati were not less loyal or spontaneous than the more purely American cities of Kansas City and Denver; San Francisco was not less eager for success than New York. Boston, the cradle of the Republic, was not more patriotic than the young cities of Omaha and Los Angeles. The fatuous hopes of German agents were not realized; there was no uprising; neither German-Americans nor pacifists attempted to obstruct the government. All Americans at once took it for granted that every legitimate resource would be used to win victory; the savings of the nation, the capital if required, the labor or lives of citizens, all were willingly offered to the country. There was a glad thrill of joy in the knowledge that at last America was going to the rescue of France, of Belgium, and Serbia; a thrill of satisfaction that she was going to face the foe by the side of Britain. There was the deep joy of liberating strife, when Americans would gladly lay down their lives for the welfare of the world.

It would be a war to the finish; there was no question about it. Americans felt that they were confronted by a power that meant to rule by force. The exposure of plots in Mexico, as well as in the United States, made it clear that the Kaiser intended to force

his will upon America as soon as he should be triumphant; and so the country accepted the challenge; resolved that even though France should fall and England be pushed back, America would go on until victory was attained. The Kaiser did not believe America would or could fight. Germany had miscalculated again. Contrary to her expectations our government had declared war and our people had resolved to fight.

The moral influence of America's declaration of war was tremendous. It brought new hope to the war-weary Allies. London and all England welcomed us with an enthusiasm such as the staid British seldom exhibited. The American flag floated over the houses of Parliament for the first time. Former Premier Asquith declared America's declaration to be "the most disinterested act in history." France welcomed American aid with all the enthusiasm of her impulsive nature. France and America had always been close in spirit, but never so close as now. America talked of repaying the debt she owed to Lafayette. It was a critical time for France. All the military strength of Germany had been exerted, and her secret agents within French borders were even then at the culmination of their supreme effort toward one end—to drive France to seek a separate peace. The propaganda of whisperings, of discouragement, of suggestions of release from the burdens of war had sensibly affected the people. But the entry of America into the conflict, and the promised coming of her millions to the battle line, gave new hope to France, and she threw off her doubts and once more set herself to wait. She had waited for England, and England had come; but it seemed that America, too, would be needed to insure victory, and so France continued to wait.

The other Allies also rejoiced. Belgium welcomed a savior, Serbia a friend; and to Germany the enmity of America was not without its moral effect. She

could ascribe to Britain the motives of commercial greed; to France the motive of revenge; to Russia the motive of conquest. But she could not thus interpret America's enmity, nor ignore her declaration of the common rights of mankind and her condemnation of German autocracy. The Germans could for a time hearken to their leaders, who told them that America had been led by English and French diplomacy, that she could not possibly exert any military strength, that the submarines would take care of American soldiers if they attempted to cross the Atlantic. But such self blinding could not endure. In time, the moral effect of America's hostility penetrated the minds of the German people.

The coming of America was indeed timely. Russia was practically out of the war, and but for America the moral and physical effect of the united strength of Germany hurled against the western Allies might well have been irresistible.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### VAST PREPARATIONS.

America could not step immediately into the battle line, as, at a few days' notice, France, Russia, and Germany had done; her entry would necessarily require a period of preparation before an army of adequate numbers could be ready. We were too far from Europe to put an army into action without a tremendous amount of work in the making of bases, the transporting of supplies, et cetera, even had an army been trained and ready, and the supplies gathered together.

But the Entente did not expect immediate military aid from America. In this respect we were more fortunate than Britain, who had been forced to send her splendidly trained army to its death in the battles of



Mons, the Marne, the Aisne, and Ypres. As a result, the new British army had few veterans. It was possible for America to build her larger force upon the superstructure of the trained standing army, thus conserving all its experience. What the Allies desired for the moment, and what we were willing to give, was food, munitions, financial aid, and ships. And of the four, it was ships that spelled hope for the Allies; the submarine had dragged America into war, it was fitting that her chief effort should be to thwart the submarine.

In 1917 ships were the Allies' great need. Anything that would float and carry a cargo was desperately needed. America anxiously scanned the weekly reports of submarine depredations, and so terrible were the bulletins that it did not seem possible to make up the deficit. If the German boast of bringing England to her knees in three months were fulfilled, then America's task would be tenfold greater, for she would be left to fight alone. There was need for ships by the thousands, need for tonnage by the millions, to replace the millions lost. The existing shipyards could not build a tenth as many as were needed.

America set to work with a mighty will to supply the ships. There was first a mobilization of resources. All vessels of twenty-five hundred tons or more dead weight were requisitioned. There were four hundred and sixty-eight such vessels, and by the end of the summer all that were available for transatlantic service were taken over. In addition, all ships being built on private contract, or for neutral nations, were commandeered and their completion hastened. Arrangements were sought whereby a number of neutral vessels might be acquired.

The greatest contribution was made by Germany herself. Ninety German ships, with a total tonnage of more than six-hundred thousand, were held in American harbors. Included among these ships was

the largest vessel ever built, the *Vaterland*, of fifty thousand tons gross. New Yorkers had grown accustomed to seeing its huge bulk, moored at a Jersey City wharf for nearly three years. These vessels were seized immediately upon the breaking off of relations, but not before the engines of most of the ships had been badly damaged by their German crews. However, repairs were made in remarkably short time, and before many months, German submarine commanders were under the sad necessity of trying to sink the ships that had been the pride of Germany. Fourteen Austrian ships were seized also.

But all these were emergency measures. Even though they balanced the destruction during the two or three worst months, there was far more required to defeat the submarine. The whole seaboard concentrated on ships. The government shipping board was given the task of supplying the ships, and was authorized to spend the enormous sum of one billion eight-hundred million dollars. The actual construction of new ships was put into the hands of a specially created board, the Emergency Ship Corporation, which acted for the government. In a short time, contracts were let for seventy-seven steel vessels and three hundred and forty-eight wooden ships, and other contracts were let as rapidly as possible. It is a remarkable instance of American faith and energy that contracts were allotted to men who had no place to build a ship; the very lumber for these vessels was still in the form of giant trees in the forests of Oregon and Washington. But these men constructed shipyards and then built the ships. Residents of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts saw shipyards spring up where a ship had never been built. The Great Lakes also became a shipbuilding region. The shores of Chesapeake Bay and of Puget Sound resounded with the hammers of carpenters, and later with the rapid fire tattoo of riveters. Even the rivers, the Delaware, the Columbia,

and others received many a newly launched ship upon their waters. All existing yards were enlarged and the work progressed with increasing speed.

The early policy of the Fleet Corporation was to build hundreds of wooden ships. But a question arose as to their utility, and some of the first wooden ships proved to be unseaworthy. After a bitter dispute and the resignations of Goethals and Denman, it was decided to build steel ships as far as possible. A new kind of ship, the hull of which was of concrete, was built at San Francisco and proved a success. Another class was the fabricated ships. These were vessels of standardized parts; the parts were made wherever possible and assembled at a shipyard.

The first steel vessel contracted for by the Board was launched late in November, 1917, and the first wooden ship a few days later. The requisitioned ships finished during 1917 added a million and a quarter tons to the fleet. The submarines sank about eight times as much tonnage during the same period.

Food was even more vital than ships. It was to carry food and other necessities that the ships were being built. As an ally, the United States could be expected to supply more food than as a neutral; and Europe was badly in need of all the food America could spare. Britain still had enough, by virtue of her own merchant marine; but France and Italy suffered. They had not enough ships of their own to import all that was needed. Belgium was still almost wholly dependent upon outside aid, and the neutral nations were feeling the pinch of hunger. All Europe was on rations. Wheat flour was mixed with other kinds to the highest point of dilution; sugar was scarce and almost unknown to poorer tables; meat was almost as scarce and costly, and even the wealthy observed meatless days. Importation of luxuries was stopped to save cargo space for necessities.

At the beginning of the war, it was fully expected

that Germany would be forced to surrender for lack of food. The time was variously set at from one to two years. But by the most complete food control, and by scientific dieting, and with some fats and other foods from America by way of Holland and Denmark in the early period of the war, Germany continued to feed herself. Every inch of land was made to produce; the million Russian prisoners were forced to cultivate crops. In 1916 some wheat was obtained from Roumania. But want and starvation were ever threatening, and the time was to come when German fortitude broke.

Austria-Hungary was always worse off than Germany. With her polyglot population it was not possible to perfect either food production or food control. There was actual hunger in Austria, increasingly so as the war continued.

The entry of America into the war at the beginning of spring made it possible to increase the crops of the important foodstuffs, with the exception of the one of highest value, wheat, and some few others. All America, even to the remotest farms of the Iowa corn belt and the Idaho and Colorado potato regions, understood the important part food would play. And all of America's farmers began their spring work with a new motive; they were going to raise food to beat Germany. There was greatly increased acreage of corn, potatoes, and other crops. The dwellers in towns and cities planned to help in the great cause by raising their own vegetables in their back yards or in vacant lots. Many a family under the pressure of war necessity learned the luxury of really fresh vegetables.

As a result of the food agitation, the United States, in 1917, had the most valuable food crop in the history of the world. The estimated value was more than five billion dollars. More than three billion bushels of corn were harvested, more than five hundred million bushels of potatoes. The wheat crop was less

than normal; but America was answering the call of hungry Europe.

Nearly as important as food production was food control. Only by proper distribution could Oklahoma's plentiful supplies be made to reach the hungry of France. Among the President's first recommendations to Congress was one concerning food regulation. He asked for the power to appoint a food administrator, including authority to take all necessary measures. It was announced that this administrator would be Herbert C. Hoover, who had directed the Belgian food relief. Opposition developed in Congress, headed by a Missouri senator, Reed, and it seemed for a time that the country would be forced to accept a food commission instead of an executive. But the President's wishes prevailed, though it was not until August that the food control act was finally passed.

There was no further delay in effecting the needed measures. Mr. Hoover was a man of wide vision and experience, and he was successful in his mission from the first. His task was to handle the available food in such a way that as much as possible could be sent to Europe. Under the authority delegated by Congress, he took entire control of wheat and other grains, of meat, sugar, and some other foods, of which he limited the quantities to be sold here. Out of our bounty Europe must be fed. The American people gladly accepted limitation of some foods; one of the greatest displays of international unselfishness. There were millions of homes numbered in the legion pledged to save food. Even the school children saw visions of Belgian children saved by their self-denial. Wheatless days and meatless meals played a mighty part in the sustained morale of Italy, France, and Britain.

A third way in which the United States could immediately help the Allies was in fighting supplies. The Entente had bought a billion dollars worth of guns and shells alone from neutral America. But it



was plain that America at war could produce greater quantities of everything used in war. Production could be speeded, with neutrality barriers removed, and this America undertook to do.

A very important item of battlefield needs was gasoline. German agents did their best to shut off the Mexican supply of petroleum; if successful, they would have seriously crippled aviation, transportation, et cetera. The United States was one of the chief sources of petroleum products. The exports of gasoline alone in 1917 and 1918 were close to half a billion gallons, and the export of all oils—fuel, lubricating, et cetera—was in excess of two and a half billion gallons, with a value of three hundred million dollars. Another means of locomotion was horses and mules; four hundred thousand of them were exported in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1917. The value of all exports to the principal Allies for the year ending June 30, 1918, was close to four billion dollars.

Our own military needs, and they were vast, had to be filled, but it was important that the Allies continue to receive the supplies for which they had contracted. Our munitions must come very largely from new sources. Military and industrial experts set to work to estimate our needs in rifles, bullets, cannon, shells, uniforms, shoes, medical supplies, horses, mules, tanks, gasoline, motor trucks, aëroplanes, railroad equipment, barracks, barbed wire, and food. A great part of industrial America went to work on government contracts. Mill owners who had refused to make explosives while the country was neutral, began at once to fit their machinery for war work. A huge plant was constructed on the far Southwest coast of America to extract potash from kelp growing in the Pacific Ocean; an army detachment penetrated the forests of the Northwest to select timber for aëroplanes. Experts searched the country for needs of one kind and another.

A War Industries Board took charge of production of all supplies, determined prices, priority of shipment, distribution of raw material, assumed authority in matters of labor supply and wages: giving another instance of American genius for organization.

It was for financial aid also that the Entente looked to America. Every one of the nations, both friend and foe, had drawn heavily upon their resources, had taxed their peoples to the utmost. They were mortgaging their future to an extent that threatened disaster. It was a grim saying that the side with the last hundred million dollars would win the war.

The coming of America, with her great wealth and boundless resources, into the arena with the impoverished combatants, was one of the turning points of the war. Under modern conditions, our resources available for war were valued by the tens of billions. Germany affected to disregard our financial help, saying that it had been exerted against her from the first and that she would win in spite of it.

Among the first acts of Congress were financial measures toward the conduct of the war. One of these was authorization to lend great sums to the Entente. These were largely in the form of credit for supplies purchased here. By the end of the war, the loans had reached a total of more than eight billion dollars. There was a popular proposal to give one billion dollars to France, in recognition of her many services to the United States.

Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo was soon calmly writing warrants for sums of hundreds of millions. Our own financial needs were at first uncertain, but would plainly require an increase of income from the normal sum of one billion to at least ten billion dollars. In advance of an estimated budget, Congress authorized emergency expenditures of more than three billions for war needs. Provision was made for a huge bond issue of seven billion dollars.

Only two billions were asked in the first loan, called the First Liberty Loan. A second was for a far larger sum; altogether, about seven and a half billions were subscribed during 1917. Another form of borrowing was in the sale of thrift stamps and war saving stamps, which was an innovation borrowed from Great Britain. These were not put on sale until 1918.

As a matter of economics, it was planned to defray a third of the cost of war by direct taxation. This necessitated a tremendous amount of work to frame a bill that would raise four billions or more. The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee failed to produce a tax bill adequate to the needs of the country.

While legislators and executives were busied with finance and organization, the thoughts of the people were ever upon the actual fighting and the fighters. It was a matter of pride that American armies had always been recruited largely from volunteers. Only in the Civil War had it been necessary to resort to conscription. Public sentiment was in favor of the volunteer system. Speaker Champ Clark could see little difference between conscripts and convicts. But reason, wisdom, and military history called for conscription. Under the volunteer system it was always the bravest and most patriotic that came forward—and died. Many a brave young Englishman, who should have been trained for an officership, died a private in the bloody battles of Flanders. Many a skilled mechanic served as an infantryman.

With the terrible lessons of the European War so clearly revealed, it was folly to cling to the volunteer system under conditions that necessitated an army of millions. The President and other authorities favored a draft basis for the army, and they carried the day against considerable opposition in Congress. The law makers began on April 23d to consider a draft law; on May 16th it passed finally, and on May 18th received the signature of the President. The new law,

under the title "Selective Service," called for the registration of every man between the ages of twenty-one to thirty inclusive. In his proclamation the President declared that the whole nation had volunteered, and that the task was to choose the men who should fight their country's battles.

The country accepted the decision of its leaders, and on June 5th the young men of the nation registered. They were 9,659,382 strong, the first great word of America's answer to the Kaiser. Millionaire's son and laborer marched together, equal before the law, and together they pronounced upon the enemy the fiery sentence of America.

The United States was fortunate in possessing an officer who had made a lifelong study of the problem of conscription. General Crowder was the right man in the right place. It was he that outlined the draft law, and it was he that directed its operation throughout the war.

Before the date set for the draft registration, the army and navy were largely increased by voluntary enlistments. More than two hundred thousand enlistments in the army were secured in a very short time, the new men being placed in established regiments with the regular forces. The National Guard also was recruited to four hundred and fifty thousand, three times its former strength. This gave a total of nearly eight hundred thousand men in the regular army and the guard, combined.

The navy personnel in 1917 numbered less than seventy thousand men. An increase to one hundred thousand, ordered as an emergency measure, was almost instantly supplied, so rapidly did volunteers offer themselves. The limit was raised again and again; one hundred thousand additional men were in the navy by September. They were sent to sea as fast as they could be trained, or as rapidly as ships could be provided.



At the time of our entry into the war, there did not appear to be an immediate need for American soldiers in Europe. As the Russian tangle grew worse, it seemed likely that the war would continue into 1919, so strongly did Germany's defensive power impress the world. It was accepted that an American army would be needed to deliver the decisive blow, but as it was hardly possible for an army of size to be trained before the autumn of 1918, the authorities made their plans accordingly. There was no intention at first on the part of the War Department to send troops to France during the first year. There was no equipment for an army, even had it been otherwise ready. It was decided to train the troops in the United States, while their equipment was being produced.

What determined the policy of the War Department was the advice given by Marshal Joffre. Immediately following the declaration of war, delegations of officials from each of the Entente Allies visited the United States to arrange for coöperation in military and financial matters. The English delegation, headed by Mr. Balfour, the foreign minister, crossed the Atlantic in less time than was ever before accomplished. Britain had built some very speedy ships to cope with a possible outbreak of commerce raiding by German cruisers. One of these vessels carried the embassy across the ocean in three days.

The French party was headed by a former premier, Viviani, and by Marshall Joffre. The great French general, who had recently laid down the heavy burden of leadership, received a warmer welcome than any foreigner who ever visited America. He visited all the larger cities of the East and Middle West, arousing tremendous enthusiasm for the Allied cause. But it was for more than public meetings that the visitors came. Serious consultations took place between the expert war makers and the various departments of government.



Joffre very earnestly declared that an American army in France would have a wonderful effect upon his people, that it would be to them a visible sign of the day of complete victory. Later events proved the wisdom of this advice. French morale was sensibly weakened by the work of Bolo Pasha and other German agents, and had it not been for the new hope of aid from America, the advance guard of which they saw with their own eyes, it is doubtful how much longer they could have withstood the dreadful pressure.

From a strictly military standpoint, it was better to build the army organization in France, where the fighting would be, than to construct it in America. All the hundreds of staff officers would necessarily have an immense amount of work to do in advance of actual fighting, and much of this work could be done more effectively in France. Troops could receive their final training under battle conditions close to the front lines; more effectively than in peaceful America. As a result of Joffre's request, it was decided to send a force across the Atlantic at an early date.

There was one branch of fighting that more than any other caught the imagination of Americans. It seemed natural, inevitable, that America, having invented the *aëroplane*, should rise to supremacy in the air. It was assumed that in the course of a few months we could produce *aëroplanes* by hundreds and thousands. A great wave of enthusiasm swept over the country. There was even talk of centering all our energies upon the air service, on the theory that a man in the air was worth a hundred on the ground. People saw visions of one hundred thousand planes darkening the sky above the German lines. Government officials dreamed of ten or twenty thousand machines in service. American eagles were to swarm over Germany, downing enemy planes, blowing up munition works, wrecking railways, until the German

army should be driven to the very caves and dugouts for safety. The enthusiasm took hold of Congress and culminated in an appropriation, on July 14th, of six hundred and forty million dollars for aëroplanes. The War Department was given a free hand.

Very naturally, disappointment and criticism followed the failure of the American aëroplane program. But the administration could not justly be charged with more than a small part of the blame. The hopes and aims were extravagant. There was not even a motor adopted until late in the year, when the Liberty Motor was evolved. America had undertaken the impossible in her scheme to attain air supremacy.

But America would have accomplished the impossible, would have had more than ten thousand planes at the front by 1919 if the war had continued.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### AMERICA IN FRANCE AND ON THE SEA.

On May 26, 1917, General Pershing was appointed commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Forces. The supreme command was bestowed upon an officer almost unknown, outside of the army, until the expedition in 1916 to capture Villa. But General Pershing was a man of wide experience, who had campaigned during the final wars with hostile Indians, had seen much service in the Philippines, and had witnessed several battles in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5.

General Pershing was instructed to proceed to Europe and arrange for American participation in military operations. To him was given large discretionary power; he was to select, after consultation, the ports of debarkation, the training areas, the battle lines; he was to determine the composition and numbers of the expeditionary army. In recognition of

the fact that he would shortly command the greatest army America had ever created, he was advanced to the rank of full general, hitherto held only by Washington, Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan.

After a secret departure and a safe journey through submarine-infested water, General Pershing landed in England on June 6th, and after some few days of consultations, he proceeded to France. On June 13th, Paris welcomed him with great enthusiasm. The people hailed him with joy, the generals and statesmen with relief.

For the time being, General Pershing established his headquarters in Paris, and the officers of his staff began the great volume of work that was theirs to do. They investigated base possibilities, visited the various battle areas, made requisitions for supplies by train and shiploads, made blue prints of camps, hospitals and warehouses that were to spring up later, made recommendations concerning the branches of service the army most needed.

Both the French and British were eager to receive the American army on their own soil to give help in training, to share battle honors when the time should come. But General Pershing looked ahead to the days when he would command troops by the hundreds of thousands; and he was determined to prepare for that time, to build the army on a basis broad enough for any expansion to millions. To do this, it would be necessary to develop his army as a distinct force, with its own battle front and bases. The British area was not adaptable for an American army because the British made use of all the ports on the northwestern coast of France, and occupied all the cities as army bases; more important still, they needed all the railroads for their own use. The same was true of the front extending from the Somme to beyond Rheims. Here the battle front was nearest Paris; here the

French had their chief bases and their largest armies; here they had fought their greatest battles.

There remained for the American army as a future base of operations the region centering in Verdun. It was most convenient also in relation to the ports that were available. Since Britain occupied the northern ports, America must use the southern ones, or those from Brest southward. Four ports, Brest, St. Nazaire (Nantes), La Pallice, and Bordeaux, were used by the American army as places of debarkation. Barracks were erected for the temporary housing of the troops until they were dispatched inland.

From these ports ran railroads that were not used by either the French or the British to any great extent; railroads that ran far to the rear of Paris and the battle area direct to the chosen base of the American army in Lorraine. At these ports gathered little groups of officers, seeking sites for wharves for the ships, and barracks for the soldiers that were to come.

Besides General Pershing and his staff, some other American officers and men had gone to France, among them an engineer unit and a number of aviators. But the first American fighting men to cross the Atlantic in large numbers was half of the first division of the regular army. They landed in France on June 26th; the other half of the division crossed in July. The French had welcomed Pershing, but they went wild with joy at the sight of the battle troops. It was a great day for France and America when those first ships steamed into the harbor of Brest. The American people at home rejoiced at the safe passage of their soldiers. Submarines were a terrible danger in those days, and it seemed a triumph to have carried the men across without disaster.

With the arrival of the first troops the problem of General Pershing and his staff was transferred from paper to reality. After a parade in Paris, the men of the first division were sent to the new training area



to begin their long period of getting ready. But it was the noncombatants who were busiest in those days. The new army must eat, and its food must come from America, for France could not feed it; and food meant cold storage plants to be constructed. They must be clothed, and given shelter, and their uniforms must come from home; the men who built their barracks must be Americans, for the man power of France was engaged to the utmost. All these supplies meant a purchasing force in America, transportation by train and boat; meant conveyance across France, meant warehouses, railroad equipment, machinery; meant American trainmen, American stevedores; thousands of men were working to supply the soldier who went to France to fight for freedom.

The preparations of the American Expeditionary Force were stupendous in extent and marvelous in efficiency. Even the French, accustomed to war, were amazed at the magnitude of the American measures. Hundreds of buildings were erected at the port towns to care for incoming troops; miles of wharves were built, the very harbors were deepened; the most modern labor-saving machinery was installed. The first draft men in France were Southern negroes brought over to handle freight at the ports of France.

The main line railways of France were sufficient for the needs of the army, but hundreds of miles of branch lines and sidings were constructed at the ports, at the various bases and at the great camps. Hundreds of railroad men were sent from America to operate the railways used by our army. Much equipment was transported also. Supplies came in increasing quantities—meats, grain, flour, beans, dried fruit and other foods; medical supplies, fodder for the thousands of animals; supplies for the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A. and other organizations. The American soldiers were to be well fed, well clothed and well housed.

The American army grew. Two months were re-



quired to transport the first division, but after that they crossed the bridge of boats in increasing numbers. Nearly twenty thousand crossed in August, over thirty-three thousand in September, forty thousand in October. In November the number dropped to twenty-three thousand, but in December it mounted again, when nearly fifty thousand men were carried over. Altogether, a little less than two hundred thousand troops crossed in 1917, a larger army than McClellan raised in the first year of the Civil War. The unit to follow the first division was the Twenty-sixth, a National Guard division from New England. The descendents of Paul Revere, John Adams, and Israel Putman were not to be outdone in zeal. Then came the Second division, another regular army unit, and following it, the Forty-second, the famous Rainbow division, crossed over. The latter was made up of troops from twenty-six States. The four infantry regiments were from New York, Ohio, Alabama and Iowa, the other units from different States, from Maryland to Louisiana and California. The Forty-first, known as the Sunset division, was also taken to France before the end of 1917.

About a third of these troops were carried in English ships leased by the United States government. One convoy group was landed at Liverpool, and on August 15th, for the first time in history, American soldiers marched through London. The calm Englishman was moved to cheers to behold the Stars and Stripes being carried to the battlefield of Liberty where it would wave beside the Union Jack and the tricolor of France.

As rapidly as the soldiers were transported, they were sent to the training areas of the American army in eastern France. Chaumont, Langres, and other towns will have their place in American history henceforth, as connected with the training of our greatest army.

Important changes in the organization of the various units were made in view of the situation. One of the great needs of the army was officers. It was met in part by increasing the size of the various units: company regiment, brigade, division. Instead of the traditional infantry regiment of about a thousand men, a colonel now commanded about thirty-seven hundred men. It was made up of various branches, instead of being only infantry troops. Of the three thousand seven hundred and fifty-five men, one hundred and seventy-eight belonged to a machine-gun company, as an integral part of each regiment. A brigade numbered nearly eighty-five hundred men, including two infantry regiments, and an additional machine-gun battalion. The American division was a complete army, larger in number than many a separate command in the Civil War had been. It was twice the size of the French or German division, numbering about twenty-eight thousand men. It was a complete fighting force, composed of two brigades of infantry, a field artillery brigade, a divisional machine-gun battalion (in addition to those incorporated in regiments and brigades), units of engineers, signal corps, supply trains, et cetera. There were not far from twenty-five hundred machine gunners alone in a division. The artillery personnel was nearly five thousand men.

The small regular army of the United States was well trained, but as a matter of policy it had been untrained, as it were, by the injection of recruits into the regiments, until two-thirds of the force were new men. The same was true of the National Guard regiments. It was necessary to begin training from the bottom, but the presence of veterans made progress much faster.

Never was an army so thoroughly trained for war. The German and the French training, before the war, was based on theory, the American on fact. It was America's good fortune that the Allies could grant

her the time to train the troops thus. The French and British each sent officers and non-commissioned officers to assist in the training, and the Americans were given instruction by experts in bombing, trenching, bayonet practice, scouting; were given the benefit of all the discoveries in aëroplane work, in artillery fire, range finding; the developments in communications in actual battle; all the secrets of the intelligence officers were made known. American generals were initiated into the battle control of French or British commanders during actual battles; second lieutenants learned all that their friends of the same rank could teach. Schools for officers were opened, where all branches of warfare were taught. And the day came when the American army was ready for the next step.

This was actual battle experience in the trenches. On the 23d of October American soldiers took over a short line of trenches in the Toul sector. America was in the battle line, though but a tiny part of it. The Germans soon learned of the new enemy and determined to discourage him at once. On November 3d they laid down an intense barrage fire cutting off an American trench. A quick charge by a strong German force succeeded in inflicting some casualties, and in capturing a few prisoners. These latter were exhibited as a proof of the invincibility of German soldiers. On November 4th the first American dead on the field of battle were buried on French soil. At the simple ceremonies of burial a French officer expressed a wish that those three soldiers be left in France that France might care for their graves through the years.

Each unit of the American force had its turn in the trenches. Following the custom of the Allies they served successively in front-line trenches and in reserve. This continued throughout the winter; occasionally a skirmish took place. But the American

sector was a quiet one that had seen no major operations since 1914.

The next step in the training, following the trenches, was the drill in evolution of divisions, looking forward to the days when corps and armies should be formed.

The navy was the only fighting force ready for immediate war, and less than a month after the declaration of hostilities, a naval force was in English waters. Vice Admiral William S. Sims, commander of the American fleet, and one of the most brilliant officers of his generation, is worthy to be mentioned with Jones, Hull, Perry, Farragut, and Dewey. On the fourth day of May he arrived at Queenstown, Ireland, with the full strength in destroyers of the United States navy. His vessels were ready for instant service, to the delight of British officers. With Queenstown as their bases, the American warships proceeded to write a new chapter in the annals of the navy. It was not a chapter of shot and shell, of battles royal or dashing feats. It was a strangely new phase of naval work, requiring incessant vigilance against an unseen foe. The destroyers themselves were seldom in danger from submarines; they were so swift and their draft so slight that torpedoes rarely struck them. But it was a duty full of hardships spent on the stormy Atlantic. There were no fights between battleships for the Americans; no sailing into an enemy port, as Dewey did. The American battleships waited for the enemy to come out as they waited at Santiago Bay; but, unlike the Spanish, the Germans never came out to fight. Their mission was to seek out the U-boats and destroy them, a work that required constant duty on the high seas. Submarines always avoided a destroyer, being helpless against its greater strength and armament. The destroyers were augmented by other craft, among them a hundred wooden submarine chasers of a length of one hundred and ten feet. These had great speed. Ultimately three hundred and

fifty of these wooden chasers were built and put into service, but for various reasons were not as successful as was anticipated. Additional ships put into commission were private yachts, gunboats, and other small steamers. Admiral Sims was able to announce before the end of the year that he commanded a total of two hundred and fifty vessels in the war zone, with crews numbering forty thousand men.

The American people, filled with dread of submarine success, felt immense relief when they knew our navy was at work against the sea assassins. But there was a general feeling that some new power was needed to deal with U-boats, and American inventive genius was called upon to bring forth the agency that should defeat the submarines. Secretary Daniels of the Navy Department formed a navy consulting board composed of prominent inventors and industrial leaders; Thomas A. Edison being the best known member of the board. This created boundless enthusiasm and confidence. Thousands of suggestions as to methods of destroying U-boats poured in upon the board. Every third man in the country, almost, had a scheme to present, varying from electric devices to blow up the boats from a distance, to a variety of ways to trap the enemy. During the year, the papers announced that a panacea for submarines had been discovered. But it proved to be a premature hope.

A combination of destroyer and depth bomb was the most effective weapon against the U-boats. The destroyers with their speed of thirty to thirty-five knots could traverse a great many miles during the course of a day, could quickly respond to a wireless call. The depth bomb was a Swedish invention. It was regulated so that the pressure of the water exploded it at the desired depth. Once a submarine was sighted a destroyer dropped these bombs in the vicinity, and lucky was the enemy that escaped. The most efficient work of destroyer and other warships was in



convoying transports and merchant ships. This means of safeguarding shipping was greatly aided by the United States navy, and its value was shown immediately in decreased sinkings. The almost absolute security to ships thus guarded is shown by the fact that not a single east-bound American transport, of all the hundreds that crossed the Atlantic, was torpedoed. The two million American soldiers were the legitimate prey of German submarines, and a prize that might well invite the utmost daring of German sailors. But the American soldiers were almost as safe as if there had been no torpedoes to fear. Never were the Germans able to place a torpedo against the hull of a transport full of soldiers; never were they able to penetrate the vigilant guard of destroyers. A very few transports were torpedoed on the return journey when they were not so closely guarded.

The preëminent value of destroyers was so evident that the Navy Department concentrated on the building of these vessels, leaving battleships and other construction for later times. The navy had about sixty destroyers in action early in 1917. In August Mr. Daniels asked for three hundred and fifty million dollars to build destroyers, and in the following year nearly a hundred of them were built.

The navy fought in the Mediterranean as well as in the Atlantic, carried troops to arctic Russia, and watched the American coast for a possible raid upon our harbors. The transports were largely operated by the Navy Department; ultimately forty thousand enlisted men were used in transport duty. By the end of the war, hundreds of vessels, warships and transports, were in the service.

There was, in the American navy, a well-defined policy of aggression against submarines, but in actual practice it was difficult to improve upon the methods of the British, with their air and naval raids upon the U-boat bases, their nets, trawlers, and "hush" ships.

The most striking achievement of the American navy was the construction of a barrage of mines, late in 1918, stretching from Norway to Scotland. More than two hundred miles long, containing eighty thousand mines, it was designed to keep the submarines from reaching the Atlantic.

Our naval losses were very small; only three or four destroyers and patrol boats, and one cruiser, the *San Diego*, with the resulting death of several hundred American sailors.

Meanwhile there was activity at home in support of the soldiers and sailors abroad, activity extending to every town and city in the country.

In the summer of 1917 carpentry was popular in two score localities throughout the United States. America was building camps wherein to train her young men. Sixteen large camps were built to accommodate the thousands of selective service men, and the same number were built for the National Guard, while smaller camps were established for aviation, hospital units, officers' schools, naval training stations. The larger camps were planned to accommodate forty thousand soldiers. The majority of them were located in the Southern States to permit open air training during the winter; but a few were in the North and West, in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, and Washington. All but five of the draft camps were east of the Mississippi River.

On August 5th the National Guard was called into Federal service and the men departed to Long Island, to South Carolina, to New Mexico, and elsewhere, to begin their training. On September 4th the first of the draft men went to camp. Others followed by thousands until more than a half million were in camp. The transportation of these men to the camps, and their subsequent transportation to the seaboard, was done so quietly and well that not even the traveling

public were aware of the number of special trains in operation.

It was a new life to the youth of America; the coming of a great experience, a new outlook on the world and upon their relation to it. To many it was a new physical experience, and required a period of hardening to outdoor life. Then came the rudiments of drill, the long marches through the dust or mud, the learning of discipline and military etiquette, the gradual transformation from a crowd to an army.

But before these men could be trained, it had been imperative first to teach other men to train them. One of the most necessary parts of any army is its officers. A new army is more dependent upon officers than a trained force. It was very largely our lack of trained officers that made the Germans so certain that we could not fight in Europe. But America set to work to provide these for her army. On May 15th, seven weeks after we had entered war, sixteen officers' training camps in various parts of the country were opened, with an enrollment of forty thousand. Only men likely to qualify were accepted; a college education or its equivalent was essential. Every officer not slated for European duty was detailed to instruct the new men. A three months' course of rigorous training and instruction transformed civilians into officers able to drill the selective service army. A second class of candidates for officerships was called in August.

An important phase of the training was the instruction given by the French and British officers, of whom ten or more were borrowed for each of the larger camps. Usually there was at every camp an expert in each of the branches of warfare. The British gave instruction in machine guns, trench mortars, bayonet exercise, liquid fire, gas, and sniping. The French taught artillery work, bombing, sapping, communication in battle, et cetera.

Thereafter, it was a common sight to see the French officers in all parts of the country, their blue uniforms being more noticeable than those of the British.

Aviation schools were opened early, although the first instruction was in ground work. It was not until late in the autumn that air practice could be begun. With so few planes and trained officers to begin with, progress was apparently slow and it was not until 1918 that the schools began to turn out graduates.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE WEST FRONT IN 1917.

The long battle of 1917 began in February, when the British resumed their attacks on the northern section of the Somme front. This phase was known as the Ancre battles. In a sense the British had never ended the Battle of the Somme; had only paused until the bad weather was over. All through the winter months the big guns pounded the German lines, aëroplanes scouted for information and generals revised plans for the resumption of fighting.

The year 1916 had left the Germans in possession of Bapaume, toward which the British fought during four months. The new attack on the Ancre front led the latter toward Bapaume from a slightly different direction. The minute the weather permitted, the British took up the fighting in the place they had left off, and on February 7th, in a great effort, compelled the Germans to evacuate Grandecourt, one of the defensive barriers to Bapaume. So strong were the British attacks, and so well supported by overwhelming artillery fire, that three times in three days the Germans gave up trenches without a fight. By the 16th of February they had made a gain averaging three-quarters of a mile in depth, and about six miles wide. This was momentum indeed compared with

the first attacks on the same front. The battle ground was badly cut up by hills and ravines, where troops often fought at close range, the British always pushing hard for every objective. On the 17th the British gained another half mile forward directly toward Bapaume, fighting past defenses that had been absolutely impregnable the previous year. By the 25th the Germans were leaving all their prepared positions on this front, straightening their lines. This had the effect of delaying further British attacks while the big guns were being brought up.

Meanwhile, the Germans were preparing to carry out a plan which had for its object the wrecking of the English campaign, by the simple, if unexpected, method of retreating. The British and French advances at the Somme had left the Germans in two dangerous salients, one north, one south of the battlefield. Continued pressure might lead to a sudden break and disaster. The German high command had no mind to let their army endure another four months' grueling under such difficult circumstances. The morale of the German soldiers had declined sensibly toward the end of the Somme campaign, as the weeks and months of constant pounding of British attacks had to be endured.

Hindenburg conceived the plan of forming an immensely strong defensive position running in a straight line south from Arras to a point near Soissons. This would take his armies out of the dangerous salients; more important than that it would make it immensely difficult, almost impossible, for the enemy to attack anywhere along the new front for months to come. For an attack means guns, shells, transport, railroads, accumulations of weeks of labor. The Germans intended to nullify all the British preparations by leaving them stranded on one side of a desert.

To this end the Germans made an absolute desert of the country in front of their new position. The



last few weeks before evacuating their old lines were spent in destroying every building, every tree, every stone wall, every railroad. The very roads were destroyed, especially at cross roads, where craters many feet deep were made by explosions. The British would have to rebuild the roads before they could bring up guns and supplies, and, when that was done, they would be in a bare country exposed to view from observation balloons and aëroplanes. The full object of the Germans in thus laying waste this region was not revealed until the following year when they began their great attack in exactly the same place.

By the middle of March the new position was ready and the destruction was complete. British and French troops were suddenly aware that the trenches in front of them had been evacuated. All along a front of one hundred miles the Germans fell back. Their retreat could not have been conducted more skillfully or with less loss. They were compelled to fight rear-guard actions with the French and British, but in the condition in which they had left the country, it was not difficult for machine guns to hold the enemy to a slow advance. On March 17th the British entered Bapaume and Péronne. The French once more entered their beloved city of Noyon only to find desolation and evidence of crimes against the civilian inhabitants. The retreat continued until March 21st, when all the German forces were safely behind the defenses of their new front, henceforth called the Hindenburg line. It is singular that it was exactly a year later that they emerged to begin their last campaign.

By their Somme attack of 1916, a questionable success at the time, the French and British had compelled, in 1917, a retreat of the foe from territory many times larger than that which they won in actual battle. Here was the first fruits of victory. It was the Allies' hope to extend their success before the year was over,

and to force the enemy out of another section of France.

The Germans were disappointed in their hope of disabling the British offensive. It happened that the latter had prepared a blow at the very hinge of the Hindenburg line. This was the famous Vimy Ridge, near Arras. Here the Hindenburg line joined the old front; to break it seriously at this point was to dislocate it throughout half its length. Vimy Ridge had been fought for, won, and lost several times during the war. Its possession by the Germans protected Lens, the coal city; its capture by the Allies would force the Germans out of Lens, or at least make the mines unworkable.

The Battle of Arras began on Easter Sunday morning, April 9th, with an attack on the famous ridge. British artillery had been ever increasing since 1915. It had seemed that the utmost efforts of man's destructive power was witnessed at the Somme, where a million shells a day had been fired in preparation of attack. But the use of shells at Arras was eight times greater than at the Somme, an almost inconceivable volume of fire. If Neuve Chapelle had seen more ammunition used than during the Boer War, here were scores of Neuve Chapelles rolled into one. The English shell production in one day was now equivalent to eight trainloads of fifty cars each.

When the bombardment ended, the British troops, largely Canadians, advanced to the taking of Vimy Ridge, the key of the position. The Germans had called Vimy Ridge impregnable. The Canadians captured it almost with ease. In a few hours they had surmounted the summit, except at the far end, and were looking down upon the retreating Germans. The whole attack extended over about twelve miles, English troops being used in the other parts of the line. The attack was under the command of General Allenby, later to become more famous as the conqueror

of Palestine. One of the events of this battle was the carrying of a United States flag up Vimy Ridge by an American in the Canadian ranks.

Here was a greater one-day advance than the Germans had made at Verdun, greater than any yet made on the western front; eleven thousand prisoners were taken and over one hundred large guns. The British air service did remarkable work. Their numbers and feats were extraordinary; they absolutely prevented all German observation work, downing nearly fifty enemy planes during the day.

The British and Canadians made further gains on the Monday and Tuesday after Easter. Then there was a period of holding against German counter attacks. For the Germans were astounded and enraged at the loss of Vimy Ridge, and the high command ordered it retaken at any cost. For three days the German soldiers tried, but without success; the Canadians held on; the Battle of Arras continued, the scope of the battle being extended northward some miles and the British and Canadians being reënforced by Australian troops. They had apparently a chance of success, of a break through that would force a general retreat even as the Germans had broken the Russian lines on several occasions.

The battle divides itself into two phases: (1) The victory and rapid advance of the British. In the first eighteen days of the battle, the British took eighteen thousand prisoners and two hundred and thirty large guns; against eleven thousand prisoners and fifty-four guns for the first eighteen days of the Somme. In addition they captured four times as much territory with exactly one-half as many casualties. (2) The bitter fighting against a reënforced enemy. For the expected break of the German line did not come. The enemy was still too strong; he could still rush troops to any threatened point. The British were able to hold their gains, but they did not greatly enlarge

them, although the fighting continued for many weeks and the British losses mounted above one hundred thousand for May. About a third of these, a very high percentage, were killed.

On April 16th, one week after the British began the Battle of Arras, the French began a great attack between Soissons and Rheims. The British had tried to shatter one end of the Hindenburg line; the French attack was against the other end. Here the German line still formed a salient; a French advance would make it a very dangerous salient.

Neville, the new commander of the French armies, was known to favor an offensive war, and ever since his accession this attack had been in course of preparation. The French made an intense bombardment before the enemy attack, and in the beginning achieved the same success as the British. A two-mile advance was made, eighteen thousand prisoners were taken in three days. The French had developed an open system of infantry attack, designed to diminish losses. In this battle they used tanks for the first time. Laon was one of the objectives of the French attack and they continued to struggle toward it even after it was apparent it could not be taken. On May 6th they took Craonne Ridge and six thousand prisoners, advancing on a front of twenty miles. But the Germans, entrenched in St. Gobain Wood, were too strongly fortified, and the French could make no further advance in that direction.

The French losses were terribly high, and there was almost a rebellion against the continuation of the battle. Neville had attempted the impossible; he had tried to break the German line at a time when it was beyond the resources of the French to do it. The disaffection in the French army was promptly heeded, and on May 15th Neville was deposed and General Pétain appointed commander in chief. This change in leaders was immensely popular; Pétain had thor-

oughly won the confidence of the French army and nation. A retired colonel at the beginning of the war, he had risen through genius to his present position. One of his first acts was to make Foch chief of staff. Foch had been practically retired by Neville. Under Pétain's direction the useless offensive was stopped. France could not expend the lives of her soldiers until victory was in sight.

By summer of 1917 it was estimated that the Germans had brought about six hundred thousand men to the west front from Russia, bringing their fighting force up to two and one-half or three million men. Under these conditions it was impossible for the British and French to win the war by a sudden blow. If they broke through at any point there would always be German reserves in plenty to stop the gap. It seemed that the Allies must continue to tread the bloody road of attrition, a road that had recently been enormously lengthened—in prospect.

The British army was at its highest state of effectiveness and numbers at this time, but it could not in those days beat down the German resistance. The enemy had drawn on the collective genius of the whole army and nation to fortify himself on French and Belgian soil. Defenses were made in great depth, that could not possibly be penetrated by the familiar method of bombardment followed by infantry attack. Under these conditions it was comparatively easy for the British to advance one mile, terribly costly to advance two miles, and practically impossible to advance three miles in a single attack. And three miles would not take them half-way through the German defenses. The British commanders, realizing this, determined upon new tactics for the remainder of the year. Instead of an attack to gain objectives five or ten miles off, they planned offensive actions for strictly limited objectives, that could be taken without too much loss and held against counter attack.



The first attack under the new method was at Messines Ridge, which the British attacked on June 7th. Messines Ridge was the southwesternmost part of a series of elevations that overlooked Ypres. From this ridge the Germans had looked down upon the British since 1914, had seen all their movements, had bombarded them accurately and incessantly. Ypres had long been a death trap for the British army. Scotch, Irish, Canadians, English, all had crouched in a sea of mud under the murderous fire of the Germans, and had cursed the ridge that gave the enemy his advantage.

Messines Ridge was taken, but to capture it British sappers worked for months tunneling under it, the greatest feat of the kind ever accomplished. On the morning of June 7th nineteen great mines were exploded under the ridge in a roar that was distinctly heard in London. The German defenses were obliterated, craters forty feet deep were left where German cannon had been. The British troops advanced and took possession of the ridge, including about seven thousand prisoners. The greatest result of this short action was that it removed the menace of years—Ypres was no longer a salient.

Meanwhile the Battle of Arras was continuing; not as an attempt to advance further, but to halt German reserves. The British had captured papers revealing a prospective offensive by the Germans, but the force collected for the attack was needed for defense. The Germans were making great efforts to close the gap in the Hindenburg line, and attack was followed by counter attack. The fighting continued through June and July, the British striving to complete their conquest of Lens, which they dominated. By the end of June sixty thousand prisoners and five hundred and nine guns had been captured on the western front by the French and British.

On July 1st a brief Russian offensive startled the

world with the hope or fear that Russia would fight. The British renewed their efforts on the west front to hold the Germans there. But the Russian effort flickered out. On July 31st the British and French together attacked near Ypres, enlarging their gains. Once more the British increased their bombardment to "greatest" proportions. The Germans made an especially great counter attack on August 1st without success. They had adopted new defensive measures, consisting of brick and concrete dugouts, and machine-gun pits, instead of continuous trenches. But by the method of short advances, the attack stopped at the designated line, instead of rushing troops into machine-gun traps.

The next forward movement of the British was to the north of Ypres, where, on August 16th, they advanced though Langemarck, over ground that was lost in the first gas attacks in April and May, 1915. About the same time the Canadians took Hill 70, of Loos fame, gaining new command of Lens. Other actions occurred from week to week. The British no sooner made one short advance than they prepared for a new one. Aviators fought, observed, bombed daily, the advantage usually being with the British. On September 4th the Germans retired from considerable ground in the Ypres section. They had by now been driven from almost every bit of commanding ground close to the city, and the British in their turn were slowly approaching Lille. The long ridge called Messines at its southern end was known as the Wytscheete Ridge, as a whole, or to the British soldier "Whitesheet." Bit by bit the British captured it, pushing back the Germans and also extending their gains in the lower ground. September 20th and 21st were days of great smashes, and on September 26th they broke through and made a considerable gain. On October 14th three thousand prisoners were captured in a new attack. On October 23d one of the

strongest attacks of the whole campaign was made, an action in which artillery, aëroplanes, tanks, and infantry coöperated most effectively. Twelve thousand prisoners were taken in two days in an advance in which the British losses were not more than that number.

On October 23d to 25th Pétain made his first attack of consequence after becoming commander in chief. On the Soissons front his troops made a two-mile advance, taking twelve thousand prisoners. The last phase of the long series of battles at Ypres began on October 26th when the Canadians took Passchendaele, the northern end of the long Wytscheete Ridge. The Germans were much averse to relinquishing the last bit of high ground in their possession, and continued to counter attack until November 26th, when they gave it up, leaving the Canadians in charge. On October 28th the French and Belgians carried out a small offensive north of Ypres. This marked the close of the long contest known as the third Ypres Battle.

The Germans in the Hindenburg line had been largely undisturbed throughout the campaign. There had been skirmishes in April, as the French and British tested the new line. But of serious fighting there was none. Roads and railroads had to be built up to the new front before an action of importance could begin.

For more than three years the opposing armies on the west front had striven against each other. So evenly balanced were they that a practical deadlock had prevailed. A hundred German attacks had ended in failure; a hundred British and French assaults had ended in checkmate. If an attack pierced the first line, it broke down at the second. Defensive measures seemed to prevail over an attack. If troops attacked without previous artillery preparation, they ran against barbed wire defenses, machine-gun nests, and were

sacrificed. If guns were concentrated, and barbed wire, trenches and other defenses destroyed, the bombardment served as notice to the enemy that his reserves were needed at that spot; and the reserves were always there ready to check the infantry after an advance of a mile or two. As long as attacks were made on ten or twenty or even fifty miles of front, the enemy was always able to bring up reserves in time to meet the danger. There was the alternative of the Somme method; of a battle of months, costing nearly a million casualties; or, of the revised method of Ypres, where a half year was spent in advancing five or six miles. None of these tactics had won victory on a large scale.

The strategists of all armies searched for a solution to this problem, searched for a means whereby they might make a successful attack without warning the enemy by a week of bombardment. The British found the answer in the tanks. But not for more than a year after the introduction of these weapons did they apply the remedy. On the 21st of November, 1917, General Byng of the British army heralded the end of the war when, on that date, he assailed the Hindenburg line near Cambrai. Without any artillery warning he sent five hundred tanks against the German lines, which crashed through barbed wire, over trenches, and in one day advanced five miles, as far as four months of fighting had carried the British at the Somme. Ten thousand prisoners were captured that first day.

Instead of the country for miles around being filled with reserve troops, as in the case of previous offensives, there was a gap and no troops to fill it. But the greatness of the success seems to have surprised no one more than the British themselves, for they were no more prepared to develop their victory than the Germans were to resist. If one hundred thousand men had been available and had been poured through,

there might have been a disruption of the whole German position in France and a retreat to the frontier.

But the British were not prepared to exploit their victory, and the German high command instantly saw the significance of the British success. Nine days later the Germans counter attacked, and, to the chagrin of the British, retook nearly half of the territory, and as many prisoners as they themselves had lost. So determined were the Germans to wipe out the British success that they attacked one vital position nine times without success and won it in the tenth attempt. The British lost one hundred guns, the only ones the Germans captured during the whole year. Some tanks were captured also.

A company of American engineer officers of the twenty-sixth division were at work in the salient created by the British victory. They were laying railroad tracks when the German storm burst upon them, but they dropped their tools, seized guns and joined in the fight. A few of them were killed and some captured.

This was the last military event of the year. It had been a year of great British effort and of partial British success. The British alone captured nearly seventy-five thousand Germans during the year, and one hundred and fifteen thousand prisoners on all fronts, the others mostly Turks; they lost twenty-seven thousand prisoners to the Germans. The French captured nearly sixty thousand German prisoners.

Both British and French made great progress in their aeroplane work during the year. On one occasion, one hundred French planes dropped fourteen tons of bombs on German military objectives. For the first time the Allies were able to make raids in force upon German cities, although they were scrupulous to bomb only places of military importance, as



barracks, aërodromes, railroads, bridges, factories, et cetera.

No scruples restrained the Germans in their murderous raids of English cities. They continued to discharge their bombs without regard to the character of the objects hit. They made twenty-five raids on London in 1917, most of them being with planes; the Zeppelin was about discarded. On June 13th a daylight raid in great force was made that killed one hundred and four persons, and wounded four hundred and thirty-seven; twenty-six of the dead were school children.

## CHAPTER XX.

### ITALIAN DISASTER AND BRITISH TRIUMPH.

The year 1917 was a year of Italian disaster, though the blow did not fall until autumn. The early months of the year covered a period of offensive operations by the Italians.

The Italians began their campaign on May 15th with an assault on the Austrian lines east of the Isonzo. The attack was on a front extending for many miles, or from Tolmino to the sea. In ten days ten thousand Austrian prisoners were taken; a number later increased to more than twenty thousand. The gain in territory was small; the mountains were too great a barrier for rapid progress.

In June the Austrians undertook a new offensive in the Trentino, in an effort to repeat their success of 1916. But the Italians were not to be caught so easily this time, and the attack was without result. The next great Italian effort came in August, when they renewed their assaults east of Gorizia, in a grand attempt to clear the Carso plateau. For days they assailed the Austrian positions on the heights above Gorizia. The enemy held Monte San Gabriele, not far from Gorizia, and against this position the Italian

forces were hurled time after time, enduring heavy losses. It was their greatest battle up to that time. But they were never quite able to win the mountain, were not able to use shells as freely as they desired. Trieste remained beyond their reach and the attacks died down.

And now Italy was to feel the weight of a German blow. Germany had freed herself from the Russian battlefield and she now had the men to spare for a new campaign. It was too late in the year to begin a battle in France, but she considered that the possible gain from an Italian campaign was well worth the risk and the expenditure of men and munitions.

There were elements of boldness in the proposed campaign; all the Italian battles seemed to show the impossibility of a rapid advance and quick victory in mountainous territory. But the Germans decided to make the attempt and set about planning and preparing. Two or three hundred thousand German troops and a large Austrian force was mobilized and trained for the special difficulties and tactics of the coming battle. Certain other preparations were going on among the Italian troops with a view of weakening their morale. Leaflets printed in Italian were secretly distributed. These contained false information and venomous suggestions. Whisperings went about that the French would not supply guns to Italy, that England was not doing her share, and that the Germans were bound to win. The temper of the Italian army was well suited to the German plans.

The Italian line of battle at this time was in the form of a sickle, it was the curved portion that had seen most of the heavy fighting. The extremity of the line, represented by the end of the blade, followed the course of the Isonzo River for some miles. For the most part it was east of the river, but at Tolmino the Italians had never been able to cross, owing to the difficult nature of the mountains. Tolmino, some

twenty miles above Gorizia, was the northern limit of the battleground that for nearly two and a half years had seen the greatest efforts of the Italians. The line beyond Tolmino had been quiet for most of the time since the beginning of the war. The region was mountainous, the Austrians occupying the best positions. This part of the front was held by the Italian second army, which was in part made up of troops that had never been under fire, and of others that had been inactive for months.

On the night of October 23d a sudden and terrible fire burst from the Austrian lines on a very wide front, centering in this hitherto quiet sector. High explosive shells, mustard and asphyxiating gas shells, shattered the nerve of troops unused to heavy bombardments. In the case of some units, their morale was completely destroyed by the ordeal. All through the night the bombardment continued, but toward dawn, as the weather became stormy, the firing stopped, and the Italians believed they had been granted a respite. But the pause was a new German trick designed to throw the Italians off their guard.

After daylight on the morning of October 24th, the Germans and Austrians launched their great attack without further bombardment. Advancing through a thick mist the Teutons struck the Italian lines without warning, overrunning the front trenches nearly everywhere. Along the extreme northern and southern limits of the assault the Italian lines held, after the first recoil was over. But in the center, near Caporetto, the Germans won a greater success than they had hoped. It was there that raw troops lost their morale and broke entirely. The mist was so thick that even after the Germans had captured the front lines, the Italian gunners did not see what was going on in front of them, and consequently did not fire their guns. This silence of their own guns added to the terror of the Italians, who broke and fled, and the

Germans advancing came suddenly upon heavy artillery, the commander of which did not suspect the advance of the enemy.

The break was not wide, but the Germans speedily took advantage of it to spread the rout. The adjoining Italian troops suddenly found themselves fired on from the rear as well as from the front, and they in turn joined the flight or were captured. General Cadorna, the Italian commander in chief, promptly sent reënforcements to the affected region, never doubting but that the line could be made good by a retreat of a few miles. There were many mountains and gorges that should be easily defended, and he did not anticipate a serious defeat. General Cadorna was more than surprised, therefore, to receive from the commander of the second army an urgent suggestion for an immediate retreat to the Tagliamento River.

This meant disaster, and Cadorna was slow to believe the need for it. To fall back to the Tagliamento was to give up every mile of territory the Italians had won in the whole war, meant the surrendering of Gorizia, that had consumed months of herculean labor to capture. And more, the new line would be far inside Italian territory. He asked for details of the battle front at Caporetto, believing that the reënforcements must have checked the enemy.

But the enemy was not checked. Not only the troops first routed, but also many others, including some of the reserves, were now in flight. The panic-stricken Italians fleeing down toward the valley had jammed the passes and filled the roads, making it impossible for reserves to go forward. The panic spread to the reserves, as German spies in Italian uniforms circulated among them, saying the war was over and it was time to go home. Prisoners by the thousand and guns by the hundred fell into Teuton hands. Cadorna was convinced. On the 26th, the third day of the battle, an immediate retreat of all



the Italian armies was ordered. To delay was to have their retreat cut off by the advancing Germans.

The Italians retreated none too soon; by the 27th sixty-five thousand prisoners had been captured; on the 28th Gorizia was retaken, as the Italians left it. It was only then that the world realized the extent of the Italian defeat. To have thus lost in four days all their gains of two and a half years seemed to threaten the worst that could possibly happen. Each day added tens of thousands of prisoners. On October 30th the Germans were in the Italian plains country and had captured Udine, which had been Cadorna's headquarters.

The Italian army was in full flight and the country was in a frenzy of fear. The entire cabinet was compelled to resign. On November 1st the Tagliamento was reached by the last of the retreating armies, and the Italians paused to reform. But Cadorna had already practically decided upon a further retreat. The utter destruction of the second army for the time being was so evident that it could not be relied on for any defense whatever. It was necessary to retreat to a shorter line that could be held by fewer troops.

Except in the case of the second army, the hurried retreat was conducted with great skill, considering that the forces were entangled in mountainous sections with only narrow roads to depend upon. Most of the guns and nearly all the troops were withdrawn safely. It was only from the forces of the broken army that the Germans captured many prisoners. The flying soldiers filled the roads, and whenever a German force cut them off, they surrendered in large numbers. In one instance a bridge was blown up too soon, leaving many Italians helpless on the wrong side of the river.

By the 5th of November the enemy was beginning to cross the Tagliamento. On the 10th the last of the Italian troops were behind the Piave River, which



was the next natural barrier. The entire semicircular line—the blade of the sickle—had been evacuated. Two hundred and fifty thousand prisoners and twenty-three hundred guns had been counted by the Germans in their fifteen-day battle, although the Italians claimed that laborers as well as soldiers were included in this number.

There was no certainty that the Italians could hold their new line. So tremendous was the blow that it was doubtful if Italian morale would sustain the armies. It seemed almost probable that they would have to retreat many more miles before a solid front could be presented. Practically the entire population of Venice, only a few miles behind the line of the Piave, deserted their homes for refuge elsewhere.

There was great anxiety in France and Britain over the situation. Allied helplessness had lost Serbia and Roumania. If Italy also should fall before the German advance, or if Italy should be forced to make a separate peace under humiliating conditions, it would be a disaster of the first magnitude. The allied response to Italy's needs was prompt. By November 3d French and British troops were hurrying to the scene of action. About November 5th there was a meeting of all the allied premiers, in which Italy's crisis was the chief topic. Arrangements were made for adequate relief, and a supreme war council was formed to direct the coöperation of all the armies. General Cadorna was relieved of his command, General Diaz succeeding him.

The Italians were no sooner behind the Piave than the Germans and Austrians were up in great force, attempting to cross. They first attacked along the line of the lower river, and for days persevered. But to the delight of Italy and to the relief of her allies, the soldiers held the river bank. The enemy then transferred his attacks to the mountainous region of the Asiago plateau, where no river intervened. Even

stronger attacks were made, continuing almost without intermission into December. The Italians yielded some ground, but their line was ever solid.

A considerable force of British and French divisions were in Italy by the middle of November, but the actual fighting was done by the Italian armies; to them belongs the credit for the successful defense. It happened that when the British went into line, activity ceased on that front. Yet, although they did not bear the burden of actual defense, there is no doubt but that the prompt dispatch of British and French soldiers was the one thing that saved the morale of the army and nation. The soldiers fought better for knowing there were strong reënforcements waiting. In artillery the Allies gave more actual help; and they pledged themselves to replace Italy's losses in guns.

The German victory was of spectacular proportions, and served to fire the German people anew. In practical results the advantage was not so plain. The Italians could fight equally well on the Piave as in the mountains and on Austrian territory. It may be said that the change of front was of benefit to the Italians in their final battle of the war, in that it placed them in a position to strike a hard blow more effectively than would have been possible in their old positions.

All through the year 1917 the Salonica army was inactive, as far as major operations were concerned. The principal occurrence was the forced abdication of King Constantine of Greece and the subsequent enlisting of Greece upon the side of the Allies. But what would have been invaluable aid in 1915 was of little consequence in 1917.

Very early in the year the British set out to retrieve their fortunes in Mesopotamia, and to wipe out the disgrace of defeat and surrender. Whereas the

former expedition had been ill equipped and hastily ordered, the new advance was in great force, with full preparation in munitions, transport and food. It was necessary to do the campaigning before the terrible heat of the desert summer came. So, in January, the British army, composed of Indian troops, Australians, and British, moved up the Tigris against the Turkish army.

The British used the Tigris to transport their supplies as they advanced, and also used gunboats against the enemy. They early came in contact with the Turks, but constantly pushed them back, and on February 25th Kut-El-Amara was captured, after a great battle, in which the British used very heavy guns. It was at Kut-El-Amara that General Townshend's army was beleaguered and captured in 1916. The Turkish army fell back so rapidly, and the British pursued so closely, that the hundred miles between Kut-El-Amara and Bagdad was traversed in two weeks. On March 11th the British entered Bagdad. They had achieved their first undisputed and decisive victory on land during the war. The ancient capital of the Caliphs had passed forever from Turkish and German control.

With Bagdad as a base, the British intended to move against the Turks with the plan of crushing them against the Russians in Armenia. But the Russian revolution occurred in time to destroy this co-operation, and the British once more were left to face the Turks alone. During the blistering heat of summer little could be done, but in September the British began to advance again. However, not much could be done, the further object of the expedition having been removed.

In March, 1917, the British set out to traverse the oldest military road in history, that leading through Palestine. From the earliest dawn of civilization armies had marched along this road, as they sallied

forth from the Cradle of the Race to seek out enemies. In the days when there were kings in Babylon, they sent their armies—their bowmen, their spearmen, and the war chariots—to ravage the cities of the coast. The earliest Pharaohs marched along this road that, even then, was old, as they went forth to conquer the tribes of Syria. Rameses, the greatest Pharaoh; Sennacherib, the ruthless Assyrian; Cyrus, the noble Mede; Darius, the proud Persian; Alexander, the Great, and Pompey, the Roman, all marched their armies through Palestine.

The British had held the Egyptian frontier against several Turkish attacks; but by 1917 they were strong enough to assume the offensive. There were immense difficulties in the way of an advance. The road was for many miles across the desert, where water would have to be transported. But the difficulties were overcome, and with a force composed of native Indians, Australians, and English, the army set out in a careful advance. There was to be no rash advance to meet with disaster. It was late in March before the army was near the southern part of Palestine. There the British established themselves during the summer months, while they gathered supplies for the advance. There are no harbors on that coast, hence the transport of supplies entailed much time and labor.

In the autumn the British were ready to advance. The Turkish army had long been stationed on the hills round about Beersheba, waiting for the expected attack. But the British preparations had been thorough, and under the leadership of an able soldier, General Edmund H. H. Allenby, who had recently come from the European battlefields, they assailed the Turks and drove them back everywhere.

On the last day of October they captured the ancient town of Beersheba, which was the southernmost town of Biblical Palestine. Henceforth the British fought on sacred ground; they marched through



valleys where Judges of Israel had fought the Midianites and the Philistines, and where Saul the King met defeat; marched over hills where David had grazed his sheep; marched past the forgotten sites of villages and towns where once dwelt kings, prophets, and apostles. The army of Gideon was not more valiant than the British army, nor was it led by a commander more brave or more devoted to a great cause.

On November 7th General Allenby captured Gaza, and his soldiers beheld the ancient city of the Philistines, the gates of which had been carried off by Samson. Then began the advance toward Jerusalem. There were days of sharp fighting, the Turks were not disposed to abandon a prize they had held for centuries. But British generalship prevailed; the Turks were outfought and outflanked in every position, one after another. By the middle of November Jerusalem was practically besieged, and the British looked down upon the Holy City of the Jews and Christians, the prize of a score of world conquerors, the desire of millions of people. They drew closer until their lines occupied many a place famous in Bible history. British soldiers came to look up the little town of Bethlehem, where the infant Jesus had lain, and they marveled at the power that had so renewed the world.

On December 9th the Turks evacuated Jerusalem, and on the 10th the British occupied it. With reverence, General Allenby marched in, not mounted, nor as a conqueror, but on foot, unarmed, and with head bared. The city that David captured and loved, the city the Assyrians besieged, the city Nebuchadnezzar destroyed, the city the Romans left in ruins, the goal of generations of Crusaders, the prize for which Richard the Lion Hearted and Salladin fought, was now in the hands of a new victor. A simple English gentleman had linked his name with those of the kings and conquerors of the centuries. The streets, hal-



lowed by the footsteps of Solomon, Isaiah and Paul, the city made holy by Christ, was forever purged of the barbarous Turk.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### RUSSIAN DOWNFALL.

Russia began the year 1917 an autocratic empire, passed the greater part of it a democracy, and ended it in unrestrained licenes and visionary imbecility. Almost overnight, the country was transformed from one ruled by a single man to one governed by a hundred million. The world was greatly startled by the news that, on March 15th, Czar Nicholas had abdicated his throne. The Entente Allies instantly inquired what the result would be on the war.

Russia, ever the land of intrigue, was never more full of plots than just before the revolution. The autocratic leaders were never so blind as just before their fall, and their policy never so repressive. On January 1st the body of the monk, Rasputin, notorious for his influence over the Czar and Czarina, was found in a river, foreshadowing the end of the régime.

The Russian assembly, the Duma, the only body with a representative character, was convoked in February; the government, however, did not propose to give it any power. But the day of its convening was the beginning of the revolution. The plight of the people in the cities was unbearable; hundreds of thousands were hungry, even though food was not scarce in the empire as a whole. But transportation had broken down, and there was disorganization in every branch of administration. The call for immediate action toward betterment was loud and fierce. The situation grew worse, as one hundred thousand workmen went on strike in Petrograd to give force to their demands. But the government clung to every phase

of its autocracy, and attempted to repress disturbances by force. The first hint of the extent of the disaffection was shown when the troops refused to use arms against the strikers.

On March 11th the government ordered the Duma to dissolve, but the Duma refused. This was the signal for the final step toward revolution. Men's opinions and actions were suddenly unleashed in a torrent too strong for repression, culminating four days later in a demand for the abdication of the Czar. The Czar complied, helpless against the voice of the nation. Russia had suddenly discerned the weakness of the shackles that bound her.

Three strong parties were represented in the revolutionary proceedings. One was led by Prince Lvoff, and was composed of the moderate and conservative Duma and its backing. Another party was led by Miliukoff, who represented the Constitutional Democrats. The third and strongest party was the socialist, which for the time accepted Alexander Kerensky as its leader. A cabinet, in which these three were the most prominent members, was formed, under Lvoff as premier; Kerensky, named Minister of Justice, was the only socialist in the cabinet.

The new government immediately took measures of great importance and sweeping character. Their constitution was restored to Finland, autonomy was promised to Poland, the land monopoly of the nobility was destroyed, all the imperial aims of the Czar were disowned. Political offenders were pardoned; the shackles of one hundred thousand Siberian exiles were broken. Russia stood before the world a free democracy.

And the world sincerely rejoiced. Russian freedom was a great moral gain for the Entente Allies. The fact of their alliance with the most autocratic government on earth had been a source of weakness

and a cause for reproach. The Russian revolution brought all the Allies under the banner of representative government, and removed the fear that secret diplomacy would succeed in leading Russia to make a separate peace. The world was stirred by the declaration of the new government of its intention "to continue the war against Germany until victory was won."

But it shortly appeared that the leaders of the Duma spoke with only their own voice. They were leaders almost without followers, and where they led the mass of the people would not go. The real power in Russia was the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, formed at the time of the revolution. As its name indicated, it was composed of representatives of the laboring classes, whether in the army or out of it. The various communities sent delegates to the council and it was to the council that they looked for leadership, and not to the Duma or the Cabinet.

The first attitude of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council was fair and idealistic. But it was the idealism that they followed that led them into the fatal paths of Bolshevism. In March, April, and May, 1917, the Council demanded, and the Cabinet passed, measures of the best intent, but, in some cases, with the worst result. The imperial police was instantly abolished, as the most hated body of men in Russia. Many individuals were executed for crimes committed under the old régime. All factories were placed under the control of the workmen, on the theory that only the actual laborers could wisely direct operations.

It was in legislation for the army that the most fatal mistakes were made. Proceeding on the theory that every existing institution was the handiwork of autocracy and therefore evil, the Council proposed new laws and rules for the conduct of war and the government of the army. No longer were officers to have the power to punish private offenses of what-

ever nature; the culprit was to be judged by other privates. No longer was a general to have the power to order a regiment into battle; the regiment would consider the matter in council and debate upon its advisability. Not even to the commander in chief was left power to order the larger movements; he was to have a committee of soldiers to confer with him on each separate project.

Measures calculated to destroy all semblance of discipline were ordered: saluting was no longer observed, familiarity with officers was encouraged; in fact, an officer no longer commanded anything. It was not long before Russian soldiers were fraternizing with the enemy, or were taking informal leave of absence.

In disgust, General Brusiloff resigned command of the army. He had announced to the world after the revolution that Russia would have the largest army of her history as soon as preparations were complete, and that it would be fully equipped. There is little doubt but that the complete defeat of Germany would have taken place in 1917, had Russia fought as in other campaigns. Germany could no longer supply enough men to hold all her lines, and Austria would have crumpled under another grand attack. But it was not to be. General Brusiloff, however, was induced to retain command for the time, under promise of support from the Cabinet.

The Council was so flushed with its supreme power that it bent its energies to new and wider tasks. It believed itself capable of settling offhand all problems everywhere in the world. Renouncing itself all desire for gain; it called upon the Entente Allies to do likewise. From a land of secret diplomacy and hidden forces of state, Russia was now a land of free discussions of the most vital questions. Conscious of her uprightness in renouncing the demand for Constantinople, Russia called upon France and England to re-



nounce all gains acquired or expected. The new government proclaimed a policy of no annexations and no indemnities, and called upon the rest of the world to join them instantly. When Miliukoff ventured to declare in favor of acquiring Constantinople, he aroused such a storm that he was forced to leave the Cabinet.

The Council now set to work to restore peace to the world. The Russian people wanted peace; and the Council proposed to give it to them by the simple method of ceasing to fight, believing that the other belligerents, both friend and enemy, would do likewise. It was considered logical and inevitable that what had happened in Russia must happen in other countries: that, since they had overturned an autocratic government and stood as free men with evil designs against no nation, it followed that the German people would do likewise. The Russian leaders were persuaded that the mass of the people of every nation was in favor of a just peace, they assumed that a declaration of intentions would suffice to obtain peace. On May 11th the Council voted for a Peace Conference. Germany accepted, but the Entente failed to do so, foreseeing no good result from it. A great socialist conference was to be held at Stockholm in June, as a medium through which the free peoples of the world were to arrange their differences.

A new element here came into prominence. Among the many parties in Russia were some extremely radical. They were not numerous at first, or even united. An agitator named Lenine had been in exile, but after the revolution he returned to Russia with a fund of German gold to further the peace movement. He was joined by another extremist, Trotsky, who had been in America. Together they placed themselves at the head of all the radical elements, by virtue of their agitation for peace and for the sweeping away of all capitalism. Their following at first was not



large enough to force their policies into action, but they continued their work under cover.

The peace conference came to nothing. Under the leadership of Kerensky, now Minister of War, the nation again declared itself against Germany. A German offer of a separate peace was refused; instead, the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, on June 17th, voted to begin an offensive operation against Germany.

This seemed to end the crisis, in the eyes of the Allies. Russian defection had threatened to undo all their efforts and sacrifices, threatened to turn the game into the hands of Germany. With the danger seemingly averted, the hopes of the Allies rose again. The United States had at once recognized the new Russian government and sympathetically offered every aid. Immense quantities of supplies were promised and delivered, and financial help given. A large commission of able men, headed by Elihu Root, was sent to Russia to give advice. It seemed that the greatest democracy would set the newest democracy solidly upon its feet. Practical help was given in railroad work, both in skilled men and in equipment.

On July 1st the first offensive of new Russia began. Under the direction of General Brusiloff an attack was made in the region near Galicia, where so many battles had been fought. With cannon in great numbers and shells unlimited, the battle was begun. In two days eighteen thousand prisoners were taken, and the Russians swept on as they had done a year previous. In two weeks thirty-five thousand prisoners were captured.

But there the offensive stopped, ended in incapacity, folly, shame, and dishonor. Disciples of Trotsky and Lenine circulated among the victorious troops and urged them to exercise their privilege of debate and decision. The attitude of Lenine is summed up in his denunciation of this battle as "treason against International Socialism." The troops of some units met

to debate the advisability of continuing the offensive, each unit reserving the right to decide for itself. Under this applied idealism the offensive ended, in spite of the personal appeals of Kerensky, in spite of the example set by a battalion of women soldiers. One section voted to retreat and promptly carried out their decision. This left a gap in the line, and the rest of the army fell back in disorder. The retreat continued for several weeks, and gave the Germans more Russian territory than they had ever before held.

The Russians had quit the battlefield for good and all. Henceforth Russians fought only Russians. Although twelve million soldiers, first and last, had been called to the colors, although their last army was almost their greatest, yet the Russians retreated shamefully before a far weaker foe. In that retreat is seen the culmination of generations of superstition, of centuries of ignorance, of years of autocracy reacted upon by days and weeks of the new wine of license. The spy, the agitator, and the dreamer had together succeeded in ruining Russia.

The remainder of the year was marked by the decline in power and numbers of the moderate party and by the growth of Bolshevism. Kerensky was made premier in July and practically a dictator in September, as the only strong man with influence. But his power was declining even then. By attempting to fulfill the demands of all parties, even of the most radical, he finally lost the support of all. In September General Korniloff led a revolt against the radical drift of the government. It would seem that he desired no more than to establish the government upon a sane basis, and had Kerensky joined him, much of what followed might have been averted. But Kerensky opposed and succeeded in overcoming his rebellion. It was the last hope of Russia.

Meanwhile the Germans were making the most of

their opportunity. They were now able to send hundreds of agents into the country to support the arguments of Lenine and Trotsky, as the latter were playing Germany's game. Indeed, there is evidence to support the theory that many of the Bolshevik leaders were paid agents of Germany and were betraying their country deliberately. Another form of German attack was the spreading of leaflets by aëroplanes, or otherwise, among the Russian soldiers, to the effect that the great Russian estates were being parceled out among the peasants. Eager to get their share of land, many of the soldiers deserted. In September the Germans advanced to Riga and beyond, almost without resistance. They had won another pawn to lay on the peace table.

The Bolshevik point of view gained strength, as Kerensky failed to obtain peace for Russia. Kerensky was most insistant in his appeals to the Allies, to win from them a statement of peace aims that would satisfy Russian democracy. But England and France had decided that Russia was out of the war, that no good could come from any parleys. And when the Allied war council met in Paris in November, it failed to meet the Russian demand for a peace discussion. The result of this failure was instantly felt in Russia. The Bolsheviki declared for peace, and obtaining control of the Workmen's and Soldier's Council, they overthrew Kerensky, and seized the reins of government, and the Russian red terror began. Under a pretense of leveling autocracy and capitalism, they assumed for themselves a power as arrogant and dictatorial as that which the Czar had exercised, and they ruled with as little regard for the common rights of mankind and the dictates of humanity and common sense.

A Bolshevik power was based on two things the people wanted, peace and land. By promising both of these, the disciples of the new doctrine gained the

ear of the people. Lenin and Trotsky were not long in seeking peace. They opened communication at once with Berlin. The German and Austrian governments responded gravely in words that fully met the Russian spirit of conciliation. The principles of peace as outlined left nothing to be desired. The Germans wrote of honor and justice, of liberty and equality, of national rights, of commercial union, and of the blessings of peace. The Russians agreed to a truce, during which the Germans made a peace proposal to be accepted, if at all, by the Entente as a whole. This offer lapsing, the Teutonic delegates met the Russians at Brest-Litovsk and proceeded to dictate the terms of a separate peace, terms that held no semblance to the principles of equity proclaimed in the German note.

The Russians were called upon to give up Courland, Lithuania, and Poland, to submit to German control in matters of finance and commerce. Even the German and Austrian liberals cried out against the greed manifested in these demands. But the Bolsheviki were fairly caught in the trap; they had won power by the promise of peace, and the only peace they could gain was one too shameful for even Trotsky to accept.

Russian disintegration began with the Brest-Litovsk treaty; the Germans holding the lands their armies occupied, the rest of Russia breaking into a dozen parts. Shortly after this, the Germans forced the Roumanians to accept a degrading peace that lasted only as long as the Germans had the power to enforce it.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

From the time the defection of Russia was beyond question, it was evident to the Allies that in the coming campaign Germany would, after nearly two years of defense, take the offensive. The Russian collapse



seemed to throw the war back to the winter of 1915, when by the first great defeat of Russia, Germany had won an apparently free hand to deal with the west front. All the gains Britain and France had since made were valueless when weighed against the German success; the Allies had won bits of territory—Germany had won campaigns. From their former position of ever-growing strength, the Allies were suddenly confronted with the prospect of being outnumbered and outgunned, a condition that was thought to be past since 1915. The Germans were now in a position to withdraw all their effective troops from Russia and concentrate them on the west front. This she rapidly accomplished.

Britain and France foresaw the attack and made preparations to meet it. But not knowing where the foe would strike, they necessarily had to prepare all along the battle line, especially on that part extending from Ypres to Rheims. It was uncertain whether the enemy would again strike through Ypres for the Channel ports, or would take the shortest road to Paris, that leading down the Marne valley; or whether he would attack the junction of the two armies with a view to separating the British from the French. The French commander believed the blow would fall between Soissons and Rheims, and he concentrated his reserves to protect the valley of the Marne. This created a situation that later was most dangerous to the Allies.

The moral effect of Russia's defection was so great that had it not been for American help, the Allies might have consented to the best peace they could obtain, a bargain into which Germany would gladly have entered. For to face alone a year of German attacks in full force, as would have been the case, had not the United States come into the war, was to face, not only the prospect of several years more of deadlock, but also the possibility of utter defeat. The



Allies' man power was past its climax, and while the same was true of Germany, yet the latter had the advantage of a unified command and of years of preparation.

But with the military strength and the material resources of the United States being mobilized behind them, France and Britain were fully resolved to hold on. They had only to weather the coming storm, knowing that it would be the last, and that beyond it lay victory. If the year 1918 promised to be one of German success, on the other hand the year 1919 was sure to be the year of final triumph for the United States and the Allies. And it was to 1919 that the Allies looked, as storm-tossed sailors look to the light breaking through the clouds. America would have two million trained soldiers to send against the war-weary Germans, and when that time came victory would be certain.

It was with these hopes and aims and determinations that the forces of democracy waited for the German offensive. The governments and people alike were firm in their stand, and resolute in support of the armies. In France, Clémenceau came to the premier-ship to give renewed energy to war, and to still the whisperings of peace. In England, Lloyd George was as strong as ever and as unshaken in his aim to secure a knockout blow. In America, all parties were merged into one, and government and people were realizing the magnitude of their task, and were daily gaining in the material things of war. What were only plans in 1917 were beginning to be realities as 1918 dawned. The army and navy were increasing more rapidly than equipment could be furnished. The air schools were beginning to turn out graduates, and all branches of the service were developing skilled men with a rapidity that had seemed impossible.

In all the nation there was not a voice raised for peace until Germany should be beaten. Men, whether

congressmen or private citizens, who had opposed our entry into war, had stepped heartily into the conduct of it. It was unthinkable that the United States should give up until victory was won. There was no need for governmental urging. The people were more warlike than the government. The chief activity of the executive heads was in directing the enthusiasm of the people into effective channels.

In January, 1918, President Wilson put into practice his declared opinion that each nation should publicly announce its terms of peace. In a speech, he outlined fourteen points that were necessary to a just peace. Included in these as first essentials were: abolition of secret diplomacy; freedom of the seas; trade equality; reduction of armament; adjustment of colonial claims on the basis of the rights of the peoples concerned; evacuation of Russia; restoration of Belgium, northern France and Alsace-Lorraine; adjustment of Italy's frontiers; autonomy for the various peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; the evacuation of Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro; reorganization of the Turkish Empire, including the neutralizing of the Dardanelles; the independence of Poland; and, finally, the forming of a League of Nations.

If the Allies looked to 1919 for their day of hope, Germany had her eyes on a nearer day. She must win in 1918, if at all. The German general staff had always ended the year with a great victory, had always produced a triumph to carry the nation through the long winters. In the winter of 1914 the German people rejoiced over the conquest of industrial France, the enslavement of Belgium, the defeat of the Russian hordes. In the winter of 1915 they beheld the conquest of a vast territory in Poland and Russia, and also the destruction of Serbia. In 1916 the ever-widening empire was extended to embrace a great part of Roumania. In 1917 there was the greatest

triumph of all, the deliverance of mighty Russia into her power, and the terrible defeat of Italy. German morale was never stronger, German hopes were never higher than in the last winter of the war. For years the people had celebrated great victories, for years the children had applauded the news from the battle-fields, where their fathers were winning, always winning. And now, Germany had beaten all but two of her enemies, and all her armies were free to strike down those two, before the new foe, America, could prevent. Often had peace been promised, but as often had something intervened. Now there was nothing to come between the mighty German army and the enemy; no Russia to strike in the back; no Italy capable of drawing away reserves, no new assailant to spring upon an unwatched corner of the empire. Germany set her force toward the new day.

The German high command recognized that the coming contest would be decisive. Their utmost strength was mobilized, their final reserves were in line. If they could not win in 1918, they could not win in 1919, could not win at all. And they exerted all their strength to win. The whole nation spent the winter in feverish activity, the munition factories working to the utmost speed, and the longest hours, while the army was being put through its mental and physical preparations. Long weeks of training were administered to the divisions that were to take the vital places in the campaign. The most minute instructions were issued. Each army group was given its definite task, while the other units, all the way down to companies, were trained in their own particular part of the coming battles.

The German government, always employing secret agents in every campaign, did not fail to call upon them for their final efforts. Every particle of information was desired, and utilized when obtained. The

army commanders knew to a certainty the strength and identity of the troops facing them.

Another form of campaign was that of giving out information to the enemy and to the world, information calculated to cause the foe to relax his efforts in the belief that there was no need for haste. News escaped of great riots for bread, of small rebellions, of peace riots, of opposition in the Reichstag, of concessions to the demand for popular government. This was especially intended to impress America.

As the time approached for the opening of the campaign preparations were transferred from the council table and the gun and shell factories to the battle area, where picked troops were being assembled. In order to surprise the enemy, all movement by day was absolutely forbidden, and all troop movements were made at night. The troops assembled were put through the most minute training, a division being chosen for a certain point of attack because of its familiarity with that ground. Nothing was left to chance.

If the 'Allies were compelled to distribute their reserves over a wide front to meet any contingency, the Germans, on the other hand, could concentrate, being the aggressors. This meant a great superiority at the place of attack. The Germans had by late winter a total superiority over the Allies' combined forces. They had nearly two hundred divisions actually in line, having brought fifty from Russia and Italy. This gave them more than two million troops. The French and British each had more than that number on paper, but in the actual number of men under arms they together had considerably less. What is most amazing is the indirect statement of Sir Douglas Haig, the British commander, that the British army in France comprised less than a million soldiers at the beginning of the battle. With their five million volunteers in the British Isles, and their million more from

the colonies, it would seem that the government should have maintained at least double that force. It is true that two million had been killed, wounded or otherwise incapacitated, and Britain was the only country in the war that had armies on every battle front.

The Germans had decided upon the right flank of the British army as the place of attack, whereas it was generally expected that they would attack the French. But to win against the French would, under the new conditions, be indecisive, while to defeat the British utterly promised to win the war. Therefore, Hindenburg and Ludendorff undertook to perform what was thought to be the harder task, to destroy a part of the British army and to drive the rest to the coast.

The British line had been extended some time previously until it occupied the front from Ypres to a point near Soissons. The British fifth army under General Gough held the southern flank; General Byng's third army was next in line, and the first, fourth and second, commanded by Horne, Rawlinson, and Plumer, held the northern front. The British force was about equally distributed along their entire front, each army commander making the best disposition possible of the forces at his disposal. In the cases of the third and fifth army there were twenty-nine divisions, of which nineteen were in line. They were held in three defensive zones a considerable distance apart, this being the best method of meeting an attack in force. In addition, General Gough had made a strong bridge-head position covering the Somme at Péronne. This was some miles behind the battle front and was considered an ultimate precaution.

It was against the third and fifth British armies that the Germans planned to strike. They gathered their strongest divisions, set the time of battle, and waited for the hour. All along the line from the North Sea to the Vosges there were raids, bom-



bardments and feints, heralding the attack but not its location. The air activity was the greatest known as each side attempted to add to its information—the Germans to map all objectives, the Allies to learn where the blow would land. In January the British lost fifty-two planes; in February one hundred and nineteen; in March one hundred and fifty-two; in April, when the battle was on, three hundred and nineteen. The German losses were even greater. In January they lost two hundred and ninety-two planes; in February, two hundred and seventy-three, and in a little more than half of March, two hundred and seventy-eight planes were brought down. This illustrates the frantic efforts of both sides to gain information and to prevent the enemy from doing so.

The Germans now began their final campaign. The Kaiser proclaimed to his army and people, "We are at the decisive moment of history," as the soldiers left their trenches to begin the Battle of Picardy. The veteran troops who had won fifty victories in a half score lands were asked to win just one more triumph. All the force of forty years converged in that army, to wing its feet and strengthen its blows, as it assailed the last battle line between Germany and world dominion. No other battle in the world's history had seen such preparations; Verdun, the Somme, Donajec, all were dwarfed. Where the previous decisive battles of the world's history—Marathon, Chalons, Waterloo,—had been named for towns or even villages, this battle was to be known by the name of the province of Picardy, so far flung were its marchings.

Along a front of more than fifty miles, or from Arras to La Fère, the Germans concentrated more than sixty divisions. In the point selected for the heaviest blow they placed forty divisions on a thirty-mile front, or fifteen thousand troops to the mile, against less than five thousand British to the mile, the latter divided among the three defensive zones.

The battlefield included part of the Hindenburg line, as the line of departure. In front of the Germans was the old battlefield of the Somme, also there was the desert they had created when they retreated a year previously; and it was this laying waste that was to aid them in their swift advance.

At five o'clock on the morning of March 21, 1918, a terrible bombardment began all along a hundred miles or more of front, but centering in Picardy. The British trenches were deluged with a rain of steel, fire, and gas. There was a gun every twelve yards, nearly one hundred and fifty to the mile, thousands of guns on the selected front, besides machine guns, all pouring destruction into the British lines. The chief element in their success was the use of the mustard gas shells in great number. Mustard gas was the final word, it seemed, in torture and effectiveness. The Germans had the range of every town, road, cross road, within reach of their guns, and they accurately placed shells upon every objective. In their Somme attack the British had bombarded the enemy for weeks, allowing the Germans to bring up reserves. In this battle the German guns were worked four or five hours only; they had not the intricate defenses to overcome and their more devilish shells were of greater effectiveness. Then came the assault.

About nine forty-five a. m. the German infantry advanced through a thick fog that prevented the English from seeing them more than fifty yards away, and especially kept the English guns silent. It was the Italian experience repeated. Fully half a million German soldiers assailed the British. The front line of the latter was lightly held, the plan being for these troops to hold on as long as possible and then fall back to the real defense line. But the Germans advanced in overwhelming numbers, fifteen, twenty or twenty-five to one, and they swept over the British, killing or capturing them. The British fought to the

last with rifles and machine guns, causing thousands of casualties.

When the Germans reached the second line they were held up for the rest of the day, while their guns were being brought forward. The pause prompted General Haig to report that his line was holding. But on the second morning, also very foggy, the Germans were rushed forward again, without regard to losses, while their planes flying low poured machine-gun fire into the British ranks, and their thousands of guns continued to pound the rear. Early in the forenoon, by sheer weight of numbers, the Germans broke through the second defensive zone of Gough's army, Byng's line holding better. The fifth army retreated at once to the third zone, and so rapidly did the Germans follow that they had reached the third and last zone before night, and, in at least one place, had broken through it. That they were able thus to plunge through defensive lines was due in part to the tanks, the value of which General Byng had demonstrated the previous November. Some of General Byng's captured tanks were used against the British in this battle.

As the third day of the battle dawned, on March 23d, the situation was serious for the British. All their available reserves, ten divisions, had been thrown into line on the second day, and now there were no reënforcements that could be brought up for days to come. General Haig called on General Pétain for help, and the French commander agreed to take over the southern part of the line as soon as he could collect the reserves. Meanwhile, it was up to the British fifth army to hold as long as possible, retreating only when necessary.

But retreat was immediately necessary. Before the day was well begun, it was plain that they would have to retreat beyond their last prepared positions, and General Gough ordered the troops to fall back on a

line with Péronne, on the Somme, where he hoped to make a stand. In doing so he lost touch with Byng's army, and a gap opened, as Byng's army pivoted on its left in retreating. On the night of the 23d the British were behind the Somme. The Germans were back in Combles, from which they had been driven in 1916. But the Somme could not be held, since low water, resulting from a dry spring, offered no obstacle to the German advance. On the 24th Péronne was evacuated by the British and occupied by the Germans. On this day the Germans made their first great advance. Every mile of retreat left a longer line for the British to hold, a serious necessity, in view of their small and rapidly diminishing numbers. Already twenty-five thousand British had been taken prisoners and four hundred guns captured. The gaps which had opened between Gough's and Byng's armies had widened to several miles and there was not even a division to throw in. General Carey, of the British army, undertook to stop it with such forces as he could collect, American engineers, odd battalions from any source, and with these he kept the line intact for six days. Here was the Germans' great opportunity, fortunately lost.

On March 25th the Germans were in Bapaume, which the British had fought so hard to gain. On this day the French assumed control of the territory south of the Somme, including all the British troops there, but few French reënforcements were yet in line. The number of British taken had mounted to forty-five thousand, many more than had been lost in the whole of 1917. The defenders were now utterly exhausted. They had fought continuously day and night, while the Germans were constantly using fresh troops. But no relief, no rest, nor even sleep was in sight for the British. They must hold on until their reserves were up, or the war was lost. On the north end of the line Byng had practically stabilized his line by the night



of the 26th, although the town of Albert, a great British base, was taken on the 27th. But this ended the German advance at that point.

Elsewhere on the line the 26th was the day of the greatest German gain. They swept on after the retreating British, suffering heavily from the bullets of the machine gunners left by the British to fight rear-guard actions. Many a detachment of one hundred or more British fought until they numbered ten or less. There was a great effort to hold the Somme farther west, but the Germans crossed at Bray, which put them in the rear of the British, who had to resume their retreat. On the 27th they swept on again. The Germans were now far beyond their line of the previous years, were in territory they had not seen since 1914. They had recaptured all the ground evacuated in Hindenburg's strategic retreat.

By the 28th the Germans were making their last great advance. French reserves were being stationed along a line chosen for a final stand, and on the 29th eight divisions of British came up, relieving the broken army of Gough, whose troops were tired enough to sleep under shell fire. On the 29th the drive was definitely halted. The Germans on that day ran up against newly prepared defenses and fresh troops, and although they tested the new line with strong attacks in a dozen places they could not break through. The Germans had far outrun their own guns and tanks and were as weary as the retreating British. They could do no more. They had captured seventy thousand prisoners in eight days and had taken eleven hundred large guns.

But to the German high command the battle was not going well. They were seeking, not a spectacular victory, but a crushing success that would win peace. And the later phases of their advance did not promise to fulfill expectations. Everywhere along the new front they met with firm resistance. They did not



desire to go south toward Paris, in spite of the reported declarations of the Germans that they would dine in the French capital shortly. The aim was to continue westward toward the sea, and cut the British from the French. They needed to go only to Abbeville, and they were more than half way. But they had made a salient, and did not dare to enlarge it at the tip as long as the sides held firm. On March 30th the Germans advanced to Moreuil, their farthest point, and on the same day Clémenceau visited the front, and after seeing the troops and defenses, gave assurance that Amiens was safe, which was the vital point.

Failing to enlarge their gains on the left of their advance where the French were holding, they changed their attack to the other flank. On March 28th they began an attack at a new point, assailing the British lines from Arras northward, with an especially strong attack on Vimy Ridge. If they could push this line back they could safely resume their advance through Amiens. But to their surprise the line was immovable. At Vimy Ridge they made repeated mass attacks that melted under the direct fire of the British gunners. They could not break through even the first main defense zone, and gave it up. This was really the critical moment of the battle, and doubtless spelled defeat to Ludendorff; for, as long as this line held, he could not send his armies deeper into the salient. Vimy Ridge, with the comparatively few miles on either side, was the only part of the British line that held firmly throughout all the months of German attack. The British and Canadians even restored their outpost positions by a sharp attack.

Thwarted here, the Germans returned to the south, where once more they assailed the front near Montdidier, and the junction point of the Allied armies. They tried as they had never tried before, but beyond a few scant gains, they went without success. The

first phase of the German offensive was over. In spite of the almost paralyzing victory, their attack was essentially a failure in that it did not produce the expected result. The Germans at Amiens were worse off than they had been at St. Quentin by exactly the sum of the men they had lost; and they were better off by exactly the sum of British soldiers they had put out of action. In striking a balance they met with a deficit they could not face with pleasure.

They did not pause for long. On April 9th they assailed the British line south of Ypres. The front here was in part held by a considerable Portuguese force. Attacking on a front of twenty miles between Ypres and La Bassée they succeeded in breaking the lines in two places, leaving the British at Armentières almost an island in the German torrent. The worst break was on the line held by the Portuguese who gave way entirely. Here the Germans advanced four miles in one day.

Once more the world was startled by a break in the British lines; once more the Germans broke into new territory, this time into a region they had never seen. The advance continued through the second and third day, Armentières being abandoned. Twenty thousand prisoners were counted in the first three days. The continuance of the advance would take the famous Ypres position in the rear and create a situation almost beyond repair. On April 12th Haig called to his soldiers to fight to the end, saying that their backs were against the wall. The new attack was as strong as the first had been. Altogether thus far the British had felt the weight of eighty German divisions, of which at least half had been hurled into battle more than once.

But the British held. They continued to yield ground slightly, but their continuity of line was never in danger. Checked by the British at one place, the Germans now widened the front of attack by assail-

ing the position immediately east of Ypres, including the famous Messines-Wytschaete Ridge. By the 16th they had recovered a part of this, which the British had spent half a summer in gaining. On the same day they made a two-mile advance at Bailleul on the opposite side of Ypres, putting them within thirty miles of the coast. On the 17th the Germans finished the conquest of Messines Ridge and occupied Langemarck. The British drew back their lines close to the ruined town. Ypres was once more a salient, a worse one than it had been during the two bloody years. On April 18th the Germans made a supreme effort to crash down resistance, but failed, and the attacks ended for a time as the troops were exhausted.

On April 24th there was a renewal of attack against the French in the Amiens salient, continuing until the 27th. The first division of the American army was brought into immediate reserve behind the Avre River. Failing here, the high command ordered a last great attempt to take Ypres. On the 25th one hundred and twenty thousand Germans savagely assailed the line southwest of Ypres, and on the 26th advanced two more miles, taking Mont Kemmel and capturing sixty-five hundred French. The possession of Mont Kemmel made the capture of Ypres, with all that it meant to the British army, almost certain. But the British were never braver nor more tenacious than when they were in a tight place, and they now held the Germans to their tracks, although the mightiest assaults continued without intercession for four days. The most terrible German losses of the war occurred in those four days, as the German commanders sent their battalions into the fight time and again, in a vain attempt to carry out the orders of the "all highest."

By the first day of May the attacks had died down to small local actions. The second phase of the German offensive was over. The attack at Ypres, resulting in a new bulge known as the Lys salient, was

undertaken as a first aid to the stranded advance through Amiens. If the Germans could cut in behind the Arras-Vimy position from the north, they would compel a British retreat either back toward the sea or south beyond the channel ports, away from all their bases. But it was a vain, if splendid, conception, and met with no more than a local success in territory that cost a fearful number of German casualties.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### EMERGENCY MEASURES—AMERICAN CRUSADERS.

The tremendous German victory came as a stupefying surprise to a world that had assumed a British battle line to be impregnable. Many times during the course of centuries had the "thin red line" clung to defenses under conditions almost hopeless. Never had so large a British army been on the defensive as the British army of 1918, never was an army supposedly better able to maintain itself. To a world that accepted Russian, Austrian or Italian reverses as a matter of course, a disaster such as this to the British, of all armies, presaged the capture of Paris, the defeat of the Allies, the loss of the war. Anything, even to the occupation of a third of France, seemed possible in the days of March that brought the news of a British break. The Germans seemed supermen indeed, so greatly did their prowess terrify and impress the world.

To none of the Allied countries was the disaster a greater shock than to the British themselves. The English public, taking no heed of technical causes of defeat, inquired with one voice why the line was so thinly held, and demanded that adequate measures be taken. There was no hint of panic in Britain, much less in the army. There was frank facing of the



defeat and the probable lengthening of the war. But none talked of peace.

Premier Lloyd George was not slow in his efforts to support Haig. He promised that the loss in men and guns would be fully made up in a short time, and he proceeded to make good his word. A German invasion of England itself had been a specter held up to Britons, and the authorities had always reckoned it among the possibilities. To meet it a very large force had at all times been kept under arms in England, composed mainly of troops partly trained, but numbering many thousands of veterans also. This force was now stripped of every serviceable unit, and several hundred thousand soldiers were rushed across the channel. All furloughs were cut short, and London, which had always been filled with men in khaki, now saw none but wounded men for weeks.

Calls were made upon outlying forces; the British divisions on the Salonica front were withdrawn in part, and General Allenby's campaign against Damascus was delayed for six months by reason of every British unit being called to France. The work of conscription was strengthened and exemptions narrowed. There was a strong demand that conscription be applied to Ireland; but, recognizing that it would take a considerable army to enforce it, the law was held in abeyance as far as Ireland was concerned.

The work in munition factories was rushed to replace the losses in guns and shells. Several British bases had been captured with the resulting loss of vast stores of supplies of all kinds, clothing, food, medical supplies, as well as shells. The loss in aeroplanes, also, had been great, and the home industries were at work under forced draft that England might maintain command of the air.

By the third or fourth day of the battle all the Allied leaders, both military and civil, were in conference, debating upon measures to meet the needs of the



hour. Lloyd George and General Wilson of Britain, Clémenceau, Joffre, and Pétain, speaking for France, canvassed the situation; while America was represented by Colonel House, who was the personal representative of President Wilson, and by General Pershing. Inevitably the thought of the conference turned to the subject of a supreme commander as the best solution of the problem. France had long desired the appointment of a generalissimo of all the Allied forces. Certain of the British leaders, including Lloyd George, were in agreement as to the need of this, but the British army, as represented in its general staff and the highest officers of the force, as well as the general body of the British aristocracy, were opposed to a supreme commander. To them it was unthinkable that the greatest British army ever created should be subordinate to the chief of a foreign army, even though it should be Joffre himself. General Sir William Robertson, the chief of the British imperial staff, resigned as a protest against such a move.

But the situation demanded that one general be made responsible for the entire Allied force in France, as the only way in which duplication of effort could be prevented, and the only assurance that the fullest use would be made of opportunities and the wisest handling of reserves. To the demand of France was added the mandate, in no uncertain terms, of the United States, as voiced by President Wilson. With their own premier exerting his influence against them, the British army conservatives yielded, agreeing to a unified command. On March 29th it was announced that an Allied commander had been chosen, and that General Ferdinand Foch had been selected to carry the burden.

General Foch had long been recognized as one of the foremost of the Allied commanders. With more than forty years of military experience, he was familiar with every phase of the present war, knew the

topography of the battlefield in its whole length. He had the confidence of the British army as well as of the French. In 1914, 1915 and 1916 he had been in coöperation with British armies by reason of his commanding at the points of junction. At Ypres, at Loos, and at the Somme, he had fought beside the British. Joffre proclaimed him "the foremost strategist" of Europe. As in the American Civil War, it took years of disappointment and failure before the right man was given command, as McClellan, Hooker, Pope, and Burnside had been tried and found wanting, so the Allies had given their destinies to Generals French, Joffre, Neville, Haig, and Pétain, and none of them had produced victory. Even so had the Germans, Russians, and Italians tried generals that had either met defeat or failed to win victories. It was literally true that neither Germany, France nor Britain had won a clear-cut offensive victory on the west front until the great German blow in March, 1918. The first Marne and Verdun struggles had been defensive triumphs for France; the two conflicts of Ypres had been the same for France and England together; the Somme battles had been a doubtful victory for England. But never yet had the Allies won a real victory.

In the crisis the Allies turned to Foch; and Foch took hold of affairs at once. Pétain had already provided reënforcements for the threatened front, and on the day of his appointment, Foch visited the battle area and inspected the defenses. He then assured France and the world that Amiens and the battle line were safe. On March 30th Clémenceau also visited the front, and he too gave his word that the Germans would be held.

But Foch recognized that the danger was not over, and he proceeded to reorganize the armies to meet the crisis. Both French and English had hitherto organized their own front independent of the other, with only general agreements as to dates and places of in-

portant actions. Each commander handled his own reserves, and only on two or three occasions had one army called on the other for help in actual battle. Foch's first act was to pool all reserves. The world looked to him for an immediate counter offensive, not realizing that it was neither possible nor wise. It was not possible because he had no army reserve beyond the few divisions scattered along the line of battle, and these had to be kept there for emergencies. It was not wise because the Germans would inevitably attack again, and this attack must be met. To use his few reserves prematurely was to be ruined. Foch had first to build an independent reserve, an army detached from any particular sector. The Germans had maintained such an army, and with it had successively crushed Serbia, Russia, Roumania, and had almost broken Italy.

To build this reserve would be a matter of weeks and months. It would have to be mobilized, organized, and armed. The greatest source of new troops was America, and it was to America that Foch looked for help. On the day that General Foch was made commander in chief, General Pershing himself tendered the entire American army in France to be used as Foch saw fit. The offer was accepted, and the available troops were brought from Lorraine to a section near the battlefield. There were only four divisions in France that were fully trained, and two more nearly ready for action, but this made a force considerably in excess of one hundred thousand. It was America's first hundred thousand.

To thus turn his soldiers over to Foch was to leave Pershing without an army, was to delay his dream of a separate American army fighting on its own battle line under its own commanders. The time was rapidly approaching when two army corps could be organized, when the crisis came to disrupt Pershing's plans. But Pershing, the officers, and soldiers, and

the government and the people at home, gladly sacrificed their own plans for the common good. There was great enthusiasm in America over the new authority of Foch and his prospective use of American soldiers. To have our soldiers idle in camp while France and Britain were battling through the greatest crisis in history was intolerable; to have them fighting beside the Allies was the one thing America desired.

The American people did not at that time know how many of their soldiers were in Europe. They had Secretary Baker's statement that a half million American soldiers would be in France "early in the year." As a matter of fact, there were, at the end of March, 1918, three hundred and seventy-five thousand men across the Atlantic. But it was apparent that many more were desperately needed at once.

The administration had proceeded on the understanding that the critical year would be 1919, and the energies of the nation were being pointed so that all branches of the service, soldiers, sailors, ships, aeroplanes, ordnance, and munitions, should be ready in adequate numbers and quantities. The War Department had been assailed for its efforts to speed troops to Europe during the winter of 1917-1918, on the ground that the Allies needed supplies more than they did soldiers.

Up to the time of the crisis the transportation of troops had increased each month, with one exception. The navy had taken over the larger vessels and had fitted them out for transport service. From three ships sailing in May, 1917, the number had increased to sixteen by December. About ten British ships were in service as transports during that period. In March twenty-six American ships, and nineteen others, carried more than eighty-five thousand troops.

It was then that the German storm burst, and the nation woke up to the fact that soldiers were the first need of the Allied cause. In a moving appeal to Presi-

dent Wilson, Lloyd George asked that the movement of United States troops be hastened. Clémenceau and Foch pressed the matter upon General Pershing and the other American representatives in France. But to bring more soldiers, more ships were needed. America was already using every available vessel, and new ships were not being completed fast enough to meet the crisis. It was England that solved the problem. Although her merchant marine had been terribly depleted by submarine ravages until there were barely enough ships for necessary carrying, yet England furnished the ships.

In an agreement entered into between Generals Pershing and Haig on May 2d, England was to supply transportation for as many soldiers as were needed, and in return, was to have ten divisions of Americans as reserves for her own battle front; these ten divisions to come from among those to be transported, their final training to be made in the British battle area.

But England had not waited for an agreement before calling her ships from all parts of the world. From her South African trade she withdrew every ship that was available as a transport. From the safe waters of the Indian Ocean she called her ships to the perilous Atlantic; from the Pacific trade routes the larger British vessels vanished for months to come, leaving the carrying trade to Japan. Many ports of the British Empire were left entirely without steamship service for the time being; Cape Colony saw no ships for months, while all steamers plying between Australia and Singapore were withdrawn. Altogether, more than one hundred and fifty British ships were diverted from their regular routes to carry American soldiers and supplies to France. The number of British ships in transport service increased from fourteen in March, and twenty in April, to about seventy-five in May, seventy in June, while in July there were eighty-nine sailings. Thereafter the



number of ships decreased to seventy-four in August, with a lesser number each succeeding month.

Meanwhile American ships in transport service had increased from twenty-seven in March, to thirty-eight in April, fifty-five in May, and forty-six in July. By reason of their greater number of ships, the British were able to transport the larger part of all troops sent across from May to October. In July they carried slightly more than one hundred and seventy-five thousand, which was fifty-six and one-half per cent of the total for the month. In all, the British carried forty-eight per cent of all United States soldiers sent to Europe, while American ships carried forty-six per cent; the remainder being conveyed by French and Italian vessels.

The British liner, *Olympic*, carried three hundred thousand soldiers during the war; British, Canadians, Australians, and in the last year, Americans. The *Leviathan*, formerly the German liner *Waterland*, carried more soldiers each trip than any other vessel; ten thousand troops was the usual load. The *Great Northern*, a swift liner from the Pacific coast, made the quickest round trip.

The number of soldiers carried across the Atlantic increased in an amazing manner. To transport one hundred thousand men across land and water to a distance of three to six thousand miles in a month, would have been considered impossible before the war; to move that number each month for several successive months would have been called a dream. But the crisis demanded much more than that of America, and America, with the aid of Britain, fulfilled the need of civilization. March, 1918, was the high month up to that time, but in April forty-five thousand additional troops were sent across.

But it was in May that the great flow of American soldiers to France began. Two hundred and forty-seven thousand, seven hundred and fourteen men, or

more than double the April figure, were carried safely across the Atlantic. In June the number went still higher, when two hundred and eighty thousand were transported, while in July the magnificent total of three hundred and eleven thousand, three hundred and fifty-nine soldiers went over the bridge of boats. This was equivalent to picking up the entire population of Kansas City, Missouri, and placing it in France. Three hundred thousand a month meant ten thousand each day, or the equal of the population of many a thriving little American city. On the other hand, to illustrate how small a part of our number is three hundred thousand, imagine an army of that size crossing Brooklyn Bridge. If the men were so spaced as to march at the rate of four miles an hour for twenty-four hours a day during the entire month, there would be only about one hundred soldiers on the bridge at any one time.

The speeding of the men to Europe necessitated great activity in the training camps at home. All through the late autumn and winter, the camps had been scenes of hard, continuous work. During that time the men had grown accustomed to their new life: learning first the rudiments of drill, then evolutions in platoon, company, regiment and brigade, and the use of arms.

To many it seemed unlikely that all of the soldiers in camp, particularly the draft men, would ever get to France; so large was their number and so slowly were they being transported. But when the call came, every camp saw activities redoubled. Troops began to leave their winter barracks to entrain for a camp of embarkation on the Atlantic coast. As rapidly as ships were provided they went aboard and were soon upon the stormy Atlantic. Some of the camps were emptied in a very few days, yet all was done without a visible strain upon the railroad systems of the country.

The first division of selective service men to cross was the Seventy-seventh, composed of men from New York City. The undersized boys from the East Side were for the first time in their lives away from their city environment. The sons of rich men rubbed shoulders with laborers and clerks, and formed lasting friendships together. Other troops to cross early in the year were the men from Missouri and Kansas in the Thirty-fifth National Guard division, and the "Wild Cats," or the Thirtieth division, from the mountain States of the South. From all camps they came, from Camp Lewis on far off Puget Sound, from Camps Grant, Dodge, and Funston on Western plains and prairies, and from the camps in the South and East.

The emptying of the camps was the signal for a new draft upon the manhood of America, and in the two months following the first rush to Europe nearly a million more young men were drafted and sent to the camps. Vacated National Guard camps were re-filled with selective service men. So rapidly was the training of these new men that they in turn were being sent to France by autumn.

On February 5th the British transport *Tuscania*, carrying more than two thousand American soldiers, was torpedoed off the north coast of Ireland, and one hundred and seventy troops were lost. The American people were face to face with their first disaster, and although it was taken for granted that similar losses would follow, there was no flinching. The wonder was that there had not been more sinkings. It was an especially agreeable bit of news to the German people. The German government increased the reward that was offered to any submarine crew that should sink a troopship.

But there were no more sinkings of eastbound transports. These vessels never sailed singly, but always in large convoys, well guarded by a strong

force of naval vessels. Destroyers, converted yachts, small cruisers formed a cordon about each group of transports, and never again was a German submarine able to penetrate the guard, although many tried. From fifteen to fifty or more ships made up a convoy group. This plan delayed the faster ships, but without it many would have been sunk. The United States navy supplied more than eighty per cent of the naval guard of the transports; and as the navy grew, freight boats as well as troopships were given protection.

It was because of this watchful care that the American army was safely carried to France. It was a feat of organization and naval skill unequaled in history. Never had so tremendous an undertaking been carried through to success. It was the decisive factor that brought defeat and ruin to Germany, who had staked her future on the supposed impossibility of an American army fighting in Europe.

Meanwhile America and the Allies were girding themselves mentally and spiritually for the ordeal. To Germany's appeal to a final decision by force, the Allies rallied to meet it with yet greater exertions. The utmost that Germany could do only called out greater efforts on the part of her opponents, who never did their best until their backs were against the wall. Clémenceau, Lloyd George, and Wilson each declared for war to the finish. In a Liberty Loan speech in April, 1918, President Wilson declared for "force without stint, force to the uttermost." The most significant thing about this was that it but reflected the spirit of America, already firmly fixed in the minds of the people.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE ALLIED LINE HOLDS.

There was a long pause after the great German offensive in March and April. On the last day of April the Germans made one of their strongest attacks, but the next day and for several weeks afterward operations dropped with a startling suddenness to a minor character. The daily bulletins told of small actions in which twenty or fifty, or at most two or three hundred prisoners, were taken—a contrast to the world-shaking battles of the preceding weeks. Here was seen the great defect of the German plan of attack: the troops fought until they were utterly exhausted and had to be withdrawn for rest and reorganization. On several occasions during these and other battles the Germans had important gains almost won, but were unable to take advantage of the situation because their troops were tired out.

The weeks immediately following the first of May were spent by the German command in refitting their army for a new attack. The units were given a short rest, then, with their ranks refilled, they underwent the customary special training for specific objectives that were always allotted to each division. The supply of munitions, particularly of gas shells, was renewed, and the time was set for the new attack.

The Allies expected the attack to come on the Picardy front. It seemed natural that the Germans would seek to enlarge their valuable gains either toward Paris or toward the sea. They had destroyed and overrun the permanent defenses of the Allies and faced only hastily constructed obstacles. The most dangerous success possible would be a farther advance of twenty miles through Amiens westward. General Foch concentrated his main reserves in the vicinity of



the Amiens salient. Willing to yield ground where it would be costly to defend it, and where its loss would not be vital, he was determined that no more gains in Picardy should be permitted. And Ludendorff was evidently satisfied that success was too uncertain to risk his reserves and material, in spite of the tempting prize of victory. He had discovered that he could not safely penetrate deeper into the salient as long as the sides held firm. The Picardy salient was a finished episode in his view. He planned an attack in a new place, along the Aisne between Rheims and Soissons. It was there that the French had expected the first attack, but they had since withdrawn the reserves gathered there, a fact of which the Germans were fully aware.

The front of the Aisne River had been the scene of many of the war's bloodiest battles. It was there that the Germans made their first stand after they retreated from the Marne in 1914, and it was the deep trenches north of the river that enabled them to hold their conquests in France. It was upon this strong position that the French had hurled attack after attack in the years 1915, 1916, and 1917, expending the lives of hundreds of thousands of their soldiers in efforts to break the German lines. They had made small gains, particularly in 1917, and now their front lines were several miles north of the river. The main defense zone was on the Chemin des Dames, a position of great strength under deadlock conditions. In view of the extreme difficulty with which the French had won the position, it seemed that it could be defended with success.

But the Germans discounted all ordinary defensive positions in their new method of attack. Proceeding on the fact that a position needed defenders to hold it, they made war against the defenders rather than against the position. Following what was known as the Von Hutier method, they won their amazing suc-

cesses by exterminating the front-line defenders by a deluge of deadly mustard gas. Following this they sent over their troops in mass attack, and so rapid was the advance there was no time for the defenders to receive reënforcements. Defenses that had been almost invulnerable through the previous years were thus easily overrun in 1918. It was by this method that the Germans had won in Picardy and Flanders; they were now ready to use it again in a new place.

While the Allies waited for the attack, they made the most of the time granted them. The British army was undergoing a great reorganization and re-equipment. One of the factors that Ludendorff counted upon in his coming battle was the supposed inability of the British army to reform effectively after its great losses in March and April. The new attack would be against the French army, in the belief that the British, like the Russians, Serbians, and Roumanians, had been eliminated, at least temporarily, and would not be able to interfere. But this was not the case, as events proved later. The English army, with French and American aid, could have destroyed the two northern salients after the middle of May, but Foch was biding his time. He was waiting a better time to begin his attack, and the Germans were themselves bringing the hour closer.

The four weeks between the second and third offensives were weeks of intense activity in the air; planes were circling constantly, watching the enemy lines. Scores of raids were made upon the German lines, upon their communications, their ammunition dumps. Every town behind the lines—Péronne, Noyon, Bapaume, St. Quentin—was bombed, always with a military objective; while British and French planes were making frequent visits to industrial cities on the Rhine and beyond. Many tons of bombs were frequently dropped in a single raid. The daring aviators were often in enemy territory for six hours or longer. The

German cities now had a taste of what London endured.

Ludendorff began his new attack on Monday, May 27th, with about four hundred thousand men, of whom nearly three hundred thousand were in battle the first day. After a three-hour gas attack that destroyed the resistance of the outposts, the German shock troops rushed upon the defenders. The Allied line—four British divisions were in that sector, having been sent there for recuperation—was lightly held, as it was not a part of Foch's plan at that time to try to hold the lines immovable. The Germans quickly overran the Chemin des Dames, advanced to the Aisne, and were actually across the stream before the end of the day. The world was once more startled and dismayed by the news of the German success. Nothing seemed to stop them. Every one questioned if this was not the final blow that would disrupt the Allied line.

The attack was made along a front of about thirty miles. The break of the first day was on a narrow front, but on the second day the Germans pushed their advance along the eastern end of the battle, while on the 29th, the third day, they made an even greater extension of the advance to the west, reaching Soissons, which had not been in German hands for nearly four years. Meanwhile the center of the line was being pushed rapidly southward, across the Vesle, a tributary of the Aisne, while prisoners, numbering many thousands, were being captured.

The French commanders were prompt in their measures to cope with the situation. The Germans had made strong feints both in the Picardy and Lys salients, but by the end of the first day there was no question as to where the main attack was being made. The reserves were rushed to the Marne. But Foch made no attempt to keep the Germans from reaching

the Marne. Therefore, on the fourth day of the drive, the Germans once more reached the famous river that had been the scene of their first great defeat, taking forty-five thousand prisoners on the way. The Kaiser announced to his people "God has granted us a splendid victory."

Foch may well have said the same, as he watched the course of the battle, for the Germans were playing directly into his hands. If he did not attempt to stem the advance of the German center, he was, on the other hand, careful to hold them at the vital points, and that he was able to do so proves his mastery of events. He put in reserves at Rheims, and kept the enemy out of the famous cathedral city. But the important front was along the western side of the new salient. If the Germans, after reaching the Marne, could push westward, they could soon broaden the new front so as to connect with the Picardy salient. That accomplished, there would be one huge bulge into French territory instead of two dangerous salients, and the succeeding campaigns would have been impossible.

Therefore the bulk of his reserves came to the western side of the salient, and there they held the enemy firmly even while the Germans were still extending the point of their attack. On the 31st of May they arrived at the culmination of their drive, having reached the Marne on a front of some twelve miles, or less than a third of the width at the base. It was then that they encountered firm resistance everywhere. The first strong check was experienced when they attempted to advance down the Aisne valley from Soissons to Compiègne, a feat that would have been serious for the Allies, if accomplished. They did succeed in extending their new advance so that it overlapped the Picardy salient at the base, but when it came to a thrust against a vital point, they were checked so sharply that the result was unmistakable.

Thereupon the Germans turned south and met the Americans.

The Germans had met the Americans hitherto only in small actions; now they were to meet the foe from overseas in a real battle. Several American divisions had been in reserve in the American region since the crisis in April. When the call came for reserves for the Marne front, two American divisions, the second and the third of the regular army, the former including two regiments of Marines, were rushed to the new battlefield and put into line at the southwestern tip of the salient, covering the crossing of the Marne at Château-Thierry, and extending for some distance on each side. The Americans came at a critical time. Ludendorff was making a most desperate attempt to break through to Paris, and only some worn, dazed and nearly broken French divisions intervened between him and the open country. As the Americans came forward they met retreating Frenchmen, who warned them that the Germans were coming.

Pitted against crack German guard regiments, proud of their record and scornful of the "raw recruits," were the American boys who had never been in battle, but who fully understood that to them was given the keeping of the line. On June 3d the Germans met the Americans in force, and that day was the first in which they made no advance. The Americans stopped and threw back an important attack leading to Neuilly Wood, serving notice to the German troops, to Ludendorff, to the Kaiser, and to the world that the soldiers from the United States had arrived.

The Germans had managed to throw a force across the Marne, but on June 4th the Americans attacked this force and drove it back across the river, in their first action of real importance. Some prisoners were left in American hands, and altogether the Germans were made to feel that the new enemy was to be respected as a fighter. Americans fighting beside vet-



eran French troops yielded not a particle in bravery, dash, skill or training, and their presence greatly aided the morale of the French. By June 5th there was fighting all along the west side of the salient, as the Germans desperately tried to turn their half success into a complete triumph. The Germans had just marched thirty miles from the Aisne to the Marne; had carried their standards to within forty-four miles of Paris; surely they could go a few more miles. Only the untried valor of American soldiers stood between them and a great, perhaps final, triumph.

But not only did they fail to advance; they were actually driven back. On the following day Americans in an attack near Château-Thierry advanced a mile on a narrow front, taking coveted ground. The second division arrived after the third and was immediately confronted with the necessity of taking the village of Vaux and Belleau Wood, strategic points that menaced their line. Vaux they took in masterly style, battering the stone buildings to pieces, and driving out the unwounded defenders. On the 7th of June American Marines began to feel their way forward, and on the 10th and 11th they made their great assault on Belleau Wood, pushing clear through in fighting of the most desperate character. The Marines were not to be denied, even though the whole German army opposed them. They fought as if their own fray were the crucial battle of the war, and their steps were always forward. From tree to tree they advanced, against machine guns and bombs, and at the end they had won entirely through to the further side. The Marines compelled the respect of the German army in those two days' fighting and earned their title of "Devil Dogs."

The Germans had already given up their attempt to advance by the west flank, and had turned their attention elsewhere. They now attempted to gain the same objectives from a different starting place. Re-

turning to the Picardy salient they made a gigantic attack on a twenty-mile front extending from Montdidier to Noyon. This new blow took them in the direction of Paris, but Paris was far off, and their immediate aim was to flank the French out of their immensely strong position around Compiègne, and to join the two salients. If they could repeat their thirty-mile advance in this new sector, they considered the war would be practically won. In new ground thus gained, they could mount their immense guns and proceed to pound Paris to pieces, if indeed the very threat of doing so did not bring peace.

The Germans had performed one of the spectacular feats of warfare when they began, on March 21st, to bombard Paris from a distance of more than seventy miles. But this gun was intended to exert a moral effect. Because of the immense distance the shells were comparatively small, and at so great a range could be aimed only at the city, not at any particular objects. The killing of a number of worshipers on Good Friday was altogether an accidental hit. But if they could plant their cannon within thirty miles, Paris would be at their mercy; they could accurately place shots on any objective. If they had succeeded Paris would deliberately have been laid in ruins.

But for once, Ludendorff's plans and Foch's expectations coincided. Full preparations were made to receive the blow at the very place where it actually fell. And now began the real battle, as a French officer expressed it. The advance to the Marne was but a stepping-stone to the success the Germans hoped to win here; that other advance was valueless unless this also were made. If it suited Foch's purpose to have the Germans reach the Marne, it was highly important that they should not advance farther south of Noyon.

On June 9th the Germans began what, for the

narrow front involved, was their mightiest attack. They used three hundred thousand men and every resource at their command in their attempt to break the French line. The area for some miles in the rear was deluged with gas shells. Then shock troops carrying light machine guns rushed forward to take advantage of whatever breaks might develop in the French line. The Germans were able to advance about six miles at the point of greatest penetration, nearly as far as they had gone in the previous offensives. But the Allies were beginning to solve the problem of meeting the Von Hutier method. Holding his main bodies of troops beyond the reach of the artillery, the French commander quickly advanced them when infantry action began. It was on artillery also that the French relied to check the German attack. This attack having been foreseen the French had a great concentration of guns, and they were able to meet the assaulting troops with a fire that in destructive power was never excelled.

On June 11th, the third day of the battle, the French made a counter attack in great force, meeting the Germans man for man. Tanks supported the troops and the French checked the advance of the Germans, taking only a thousand prisoners, but inflicting tremendous losses. German shock troops that had been trained for months melted away in a vain attempt to push on. The French not only held the enemy but actually recovered about a mile of territory. It was a tremendous defeat for the Germans, who had entirely failed in their fourth great offensive. They had set Compiègne as the second day's objective but were not able to get more than halfway. On the 12th, 13th, and 14th, they continued to attack in the direction of Compiègne, but the first onslaught having been broken they were utterly unable to resume their advance. By June 15th the fourth offensive was definitely over. The Germans had already won their last

victory when they reached the Marne, but sought to gloss over their final defeat by dwelling on the fact that they had taken seventy-five thousand prisoners, including two generals, since May 27th.

Then followed another long pause, during which the Germans prepared another blow. During this time the Germans made no serious attacks whatever. But for the Allies it was a period of continuous activity. There was hardly a day in which they did not make a small attack somewhere on the battlefield. On June 20th and 21st American soldiers made small advances at Cantigny and Château-Thierry, while the British and French made a number of raids at various points. On the remaining days of June there were battles on a small scale, in which the Allies, either French, Italian, English, Canadian, Australian, or American, gained their objectives, which were more often prisoners and information rather than position. On the fourth of July Australians, aided by Americans, attacked in front of Amiens and gained ground and prisoners. The cumulative effect of all these Allied attacks was considerable, and clearly foreshadowed the end of their preparations.

The Germans were near desperation as they saw the months pass without final victory and peace. They had made splendid advances, but when they tried to finish the enemy, to deliver a last crushing blow, they had always been checked. But it was impossible to stop without confessing defeat: they must go on. Ludendorff planned a last battle, which was heralded as the "Peace Storm." He now planned to enlarge the Marne salient to the east and south, and at the same time sweep down from the east of Rheims in a wide advance. Châlons was his immediate objective; once there, he would be beyond all prepared defenses, and might be able to finally crush the French army.

It was absolutely vital that Foch and his generals should know where this new attack would fall, and

when it would take place. They could not now afford to yield more ground, but unless they were able to prepare with exact knowledge, they could not hope to check the Germans until after valuable territory had been taken. All their raids from June 15th on were for the prime purpose of ascertaining where the next German offensive would be launched. In the Lys salient, near Amiens, around the curve at Montdidier and Noyon, in the Marne region and from Rheims eastward, the Allied commanders felt out the enemy lines, kept in touch with all his divisions, knew of his movements and plans, while the air service was ever watchful for large troop movements. As early as the 1st of July the French scouts reported that the new blow was to come on both sides of Rheims.

With this vital point settled, preparations were completed to meet the attack. Foch planned to check the new offensive at the outset—to hold the Germans in their tracks, instead of falling back as before. The French line east of Rheims was commanded by General Gouraud; the section southwest of Rheims was in charge of General Berthelot. These two generals, under the direction of Foch and Pétain, made the most minute preparations to meet the assault. As the time drew near there was new confirmation of the German plans. By the 10th of July it was settled that the attack would occur either on the 14th or 15th; but not content with that the French sought even more exact information. On the evening of July 14th a French officer, Lieutenant Balestier, and four men, made a bold dash into a German trench. They returned with the exact information that the attack was to begin the following morning at four-fifteen, that the preliminary bombardment would begin at midnight. It was fatal to the Germans that the French were in possession of this information. Their own bombardment was anticipated by an hour by the French artillery, and before the German guns opened



fire, every French piece was being worked as rapidly as possible.

On the morning of July 15th the Germans began their last great attack, destined to failure from the first. The soldiers left their trenches at the appointed time and started to overrun the French trenches. But General Pétain had devised a method of meeting the hitherto unstopable Germans. The real defense was made in a second line some distance behind the front, so that the Germans, in a sense, launched their blow into air. This plan involved, however, the sacrifice of practically all the troops that occupied the front line trenches. In this battle every Frenchman in these trenches was there with the full knowledge that he had only one chance in ten of surviving. Their mission was to lose their lives that France might be saved, for it was largely upon their efforts that the success of the defense depended. They were to form islands of resistance in the German flood, to delay the advance, to split and divide assaulting columns. And they played their part most valiantly. In some cases small bodies of troops held out all through the day. It is impossible to overestimate the value of their resistance. They were heroes who were never to be welcomed home.

All along a sixty-mile front the Germans attacked. East of Rheims, the Rainbow division of Americans was in line under General Gouraud, and most courageously did they hold their part of the front. The Germans were held absolutely when they came to the principal defenses, and only one or two very slight advances were made. Here the check was so decided that the Germans gave up their attempt in dismay.

The only success the Germans achieved was between Rheims and the Marne, and also along the Marne. The first day they made an advance of a mile on a front of three in one place, and the same day threw

a large force across the Marne, penetrating a few miles beyond, and five miles upstream toward Epernay. At one place, however, the second and third American divisions threw back a force across the Marne, and of twenty-five thousand who crossed, ten thousand were left as casualties.

For three days the Germans continued their attacks, not to win their grandiose objective—that was impossible of realization after their repulse—but to gain some show of success that would maintain their supremacy until a new blow could be planned. Their gains thus far measured a few scant miles, a poor reward for the immense cost in casualties.

But the German hour was over. By reason of their tremendous efforts they had exhausted themselves. Every gain they had made, the three huge salients they had created, served only to hasten their defeat, while the soldiers who might have held the Hindenburg line against all assaults were sacrificed against the Allied defense.

The German Empire had celebrated its last victory; had won its last bit of territory; just one hundred days separated it from complete downfall.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE ALLIED COUNTER OFFENSIVE.

The lessons of the Battle of Cambrai, in which General Byng had broken the Hindenburg line by the use of a great number of tanks, were taken to heart by both the French and the English, who began to construct these clumsy yet effective machines by the hundred. It was upon these, as well as upon reinforcements of soldiers, that Foch waited, during the months of the German offensive. He was not to be tempted to begin his own campaign until he was fully

ready. The French constructed tanks that were much smaller than those used by the British. They were called the Whippet tanks, and were capable of considerable speed—as fast as men could run—instead of the lumbering, crawling pace of earlier types. Being small they were much harder for the enemy to hit, but they were just as invulnerable to bullets or small shells.

The world expected offensive warfare from Foch; it had been his favorite maxim that victory could be won only by attack. When the months passed without an assault, the non-military world wondered and waited. But Foch's time was approaching; he kept his finger on the pulse of the battles, applying pressure when the course of warfare threatened his armies. While, as a Frenchman, he must have regretted the second German eruption over the fair fields of the Marne and the lower Somme, and mourned over the thousands who once again were compelled to flee their homes, as a general he must have rejoiced at the turn events had taken. There was no more favorable position possible for him than that which the Germans themselves had created. The safety of the Kaiser's armies in the three salients depended absolutely upon the inability of the Allies to strike back. The Germans assumed that their enemies were so badly beaten they could not possibly undertake a general offensive during the remainder of the year. Never were their calculations further from the truth. Not only had the Germans placed themselves in positions that invited attack, but by reason of their offensives and the losses resulting from them, they had deprived themselves of the men necessary to a successful defense. Risking all in the hope of the highest gains they doomed themselves to failure, complete and final.

Foch was not entirely ready to begin his counter offensive in the middle of July. The British armies

would not be ready for two weeks, at least, and not all the French were entirely prepared. It was only by reliance upon large numbers of American soldiers that an offensive was possible, and Foch was doubtful if the Americans were ready for operations on a large scale; as yet only two divisions had been tested in real battles. It was vital that a counter offensive be successful. To begin one while the outcome seemed doubtful was to risk all chance of success for the rest of the year. But General Pershing was very sure of his men, and urged General Foch to trust to their valor and zeal. And the great French general decided to make his attack with American assistance.

While the offensive was in course of preparation the German attack of July 15th was also imminent, and it was necessary to first check this. As early as the night of July 15th Foch was satisfied that the German attack was a failure, and that he could proceed with his own assault in safety. Even though the Germans continued to advance during the next two days, it was upon a very narrow front; the main advance had been definitely checked.

The great assault was planned to take place along the western side of the Marne salient, or from a point near Soissons to Château-Thierry. The plan was to crush in that side of the salient, even while the Germans were attacking along the east side. Two French armies were given the task of winning the first Allied offensive of 1918. One, commanded by General Mangin, occupied the line between the Aisne and the Ourcq rivers, or the northern sector; the other, by General Degoutte's army, extending from the Ourcq to Château-Thierry. The first and second American divisions were attached to General Mangin's army; while the third division of the regular army, the Twenty-sixth or New England division, and the Twenty-eighth, composed entirely of Pennsylvania troops, were with General Degoutte's army, and were

all stationed near Château-Thierry. The Twenty-sixth division relieved the Marines, who had fought so long and so hard at Belleau Wood and adjacent territory.

On July 18th the last phase of the great war began with the assault of the Franco-American armies. In the advance begun there, the Germans were started on the great retreat that did not thereafter pause a moment until they were finally beaten to submission.

The battle began without artillery preparations. Preceded by a great fleet of tanks, and by a tremendous rolling barrage fire, the troops left their trenches at four forty-five a. m. and started across the country toward the German lines. The attack was a complete success, due largely to the fact that it was a great surprise to the Germans. Officers and men were captured by hundreds in their dugouts before they had time to emerge. Entire headquarter staffs were taken, hundreds of guns, large and small, were captured. The French and Americans swept on over first, second, and third enemy possessions, taking thousands of prisoners. In some cases the advance was five or six miles. There was no part of the line all along a twenty-eight mile front that did not make a considerable advance. The French nation was thrilled with the victory of the third Marne Battle; the English rejoiced with their Allies. While in far-off America thousands of towns and cities heard the news that their own boys were at last fighting for liberty.

The actions of the Americans in this battle convinced Foch and satisfied Pershing. Generals Gouraud, Mangin, and Degoutte gave them the highest praise, comparing them to the oldest and best of their own French regiments. The first and second divisions were at Soissons, where they swept forward with the utmost zeal and the greatest disregard of danger. One of these divisions did not arrive on the field until



the night before the battle began, and it had no time for sleep. These two divisions fought continuously for five days before they were relieved, when they gave place, tired, but happy, to other men.

In the Château-Thierry sector, the other three divisions were fighting as well and as successfully. They helped to drive the Germans back across the Marne, occupied Château-Thierry itself, and fought their way forward everywhere. They distinguished themselves by their daring; frequently detachments went ahead too fast and had to be recalled. The third division was engaged in resisting the German offensive at the top of the salient, but when their own attack began they pushed forward after the retreating Germans, fighting for twelve continuous days, and were relieved after they had advanced to the sources of the Ourcq. The Twenty-sixth, or Yankee division, was north of Château-Thierry at the beginning of the offensive. They advanced with the rest of the line and performed their allotted task, taking the village of Torcy in the first hour, and occupying Belleau village. They met very severe resistance at the latter point, but pushed on, day after day, taking several hundred prisoners, and capturing one nine inch cannon.

The Fourth division of regular army troops, the Thirty-second division, made up of National Guardsmen from Michigan and Wisconsin, and the famous Rainbow division, all appeared at the Battle of the Marne after a few days, relieving other American divisions. These were relieved in turn as other divisions appeared later. The Fourth division was relieved by the Seventy-seventh. These New York City men were the first draft troops to fight. They had hurried overseas to help check the victorious Germans, but were pursuing a defeated army instead. Altogether nearly three hundred thousand Americans fought in the last Battle of the Marne—from which it can be seen that American troops were indispen-

sable; that the great offensive would not have been possible without them.

Meanwhile the general situation was favorable to the Allies. On the 19th, the second day of the battle, the French and Americans continued their advance, with the hope of closing the mouth of the salient. But too many German divisions were at hand, and by the close of the second day their presence was felt in the stiffened German resistance. It was then that the real struggle began, the Allies fighting to push on, the Germans resisting with all their strength lest their huge force be captured. For them, the latter danger was over by the 20th, on which day they withdrew their troops from south of the Marne. But it was still necessary to retreat farther; the Allies had won positions that dominated Soissons, and would not neglect any chance to make a new penetration.

When the Allies were visibly checked at Soissons, Foch ordered attacks on the opposite side of the salient, and there the French and British assailed the Germans, while the Americans in the south were pressing hard upon the retreating foe. They fought through every street and from house to house in Château-Thierry, followed them over every hill and flanked every forest position, cleaning up every machine-gun nest as they went.

The three days following July 20th were days of hard fighting, of desperate counter attacks by the Germans, of slow advance by the Allies. On the 24th the French and Americans advanced two miles north of Château-Thierry. By the 25th the Allies had taken more than twenty-five thousand prisoners, and had reduced the width of the salient at the base from thirty to twenty miles.

The Germans had now entirely abandoned the line of the Marne River; the famed stream was for the last time cleared of enemy troops. They withdrew northward, fighting rear-guard actions and leaving

hidden machine guns to delay the pursuing Americans. On the 27th there was a three-mile advance, and on the 28th the Americans captured Fère-en-Tardenois. Some miles north of the Marne a small stream, the Ourcq, divided the salient midway between the Aisne and the Marne, and the Germans attempted to hold this line for a time. But the Allies were ascending the stream from the west and approaching broadside from the south, and so constant was the pressure that the Germans abandoned the Ourcq on July 29th.

Two new American divisions now relieved their tired comrades and took up the work of keeping the enemy on the retreat. Among these new troops was a regiment or so from Wisconsin, composed in part of German-Americans. No soldier fought better than these men, who for the next week fought day and night; first in advancing to the town of Fismes, and then in capturing it. On August 2d the French entered Soissons, making an advance of three to five miles. The Germans now gave up all hope of defense in the salient itself, and the next few days saw them retreating from the territory south of the Vesle, a small stream that flows into the Aisne from the south. The beginning of the fifth year of the Great War was celebrated by the French and Americans, who drove their enemies across the river and gained full possession of Fismes.

This practically ended the first phase of the battle. The French and Americans, with some help from British troops, had achieved a brilliant success over several German armies at a moment when the latter were in full force, and were making an offensive of their own. They had captured thirty-five thousand prisoners, taken seven hundred and fifty guns and several thousand machine guns. The supplies captured were vast, and those destroyed by the Germans during their retreat were even greater in quantity. The French commanders had outgeneraled the Ger-

mans and compelled them to relinquish their most dangerous gains, had driven the enemy twenty-five miles farther from Paris.

The German high command was astounded by the Allied success coming as it did where their own armies were in the greatest strength. They anticipated further attacks in the same region, and made the greatest efforts to prepare for defense. If they could inflict a defeat even now, if Foch's armies should try to advance farther and fail, it would balance their own defeat. But Foch had no intention of attacking the new line in force for the present. He turned his energies elsewhere.

The Picardy salient was unlike the one on the Marne in that it was immensely larger, and instead of forming an acute triangle, as in the case of the one Foch had just destroyed, it was obtuse, had a west side and a south side, instead of east and west sides. Its base was too broad to be attacked in the manner of the Marne salient. The Germans felt safe in this salient. They were only pausing on the lines they occupied, preparatory to a further advance, and did not fortify themselves for defense. Their confidence was largely based upon the supposed condition of the British armies.

The British armies had undergone a long period of reorganization since their great disaster in March, even while they were fighting desperately in Flanders and Picardy. Hundreds of thousands of reënforcements were received and fitted into existing corps; all their losses of guns and supplies were made up. The several armies were still under the same commanders—namely, Generals Plumer, Horne, Rawlinson, and Byng—all subordinate to Field Marshall Haig, and to the supreme commander, Foch. Only General Gough, whose army had broken, no longer commanded a force.

By the 1st of August the British armies were

ready to renew the offensive. For some weeks they had been feeling out the German line, getting information. Foch gave the word that started the British toward the Hindenburg line. At early dawn, on August 8th, the British fourth army, commanded by General Rawlinson, attacked the western side of the Picardy salient along a front of twenty-five miles from Albert southward. Adjoining the British, the first French army of General Debeney also attacked, their line swinging around the curve of the salient to Montdidier. The advance was not heralded by a period of bombardment. Only a rolling barrage fire, began at the moment of attack, protected the assailants, while a host of tanks led the way into the German lines.

The assault was instantly successful, the Allies—Australians, English, French—sweeping forward for miles over German trenches and after the fleeing Germans. Nowhere along the forty-mile line of attack was there even a semblance of failure. In the case of the British their losses were less than the number of prisoners they captured. By the end of the second day their advance was carried still farther. They were nearly fifteen miles beyond their starting place at the deepest point. Amiens was now many miles away from the German line, and the distance was increasing every hour. On August 10th the French captured Montdidier, held by the Germans since the last days of March. They made a six-mile advance along a front of thirteen miles, creating a long line of disturbance for the German command to deal with. By the end of the third day nearly forty thousand Germans, or the equivalent of three divisions, had been captured.

The attack was not checked immediately, as previous British attacks had been. The British were eager to recover the ground they had lost in March, and they pressed toward the old Somme battlefield as their immediate goal. Their aviators bombed the bridges



over the Somme, hindering the Germans in their retreat. Every day saw a new British advance, while the French were increasing their momentum. An American division was with the British, and on August 12th this division, together with their friends of the English army, reached the town of Bray, the loss of which had been so serious in March.

The Germans now stood upon a line reaching from Albert through Chaulnes, Roye, and Lassigny to the west of Noyon. Here they attempted to hold the attack. They had lost nearly all the territory west of the original Somme line of 1916. For some few days there was no general advance, only hard fighting, in which local thrusts were made by all the Allies. The Germans were in danger of being outflanked from a wide line, should the Allies penetrate farther.

Meanwhile the Germans were becoming aware of Foch's strategy, and painfully aware of his resources in men, and guns, and tanks. They decided to withdraw their armies to the Hindenburg line in the hope of maintaining the same successful defense they had held for nearly four years. By August 15th they began to withdraw from the Lys salient that cut in behind Ypres, and the British could not interfere greatly, being occupied in Picardy. On the 18th Haig's men took the important town of Merville, and territory equal to a fifth of the salient.

Foch kept his chief energies for the moment for the Picardy battle. As soon as the British advance showed signs of being held up, he promptly made an attack in a new place on the wide circle, sending General Mangin's army against the Germans on the far corner above Noyon. Here, advancing up the Oise River, he cut into the German defense. On August 30th Mangin advanced nearly three miles beyond the Oise, taking eight thousand prisoners, and putting his army well on the flank of the German position at Noyon. The following day he made an even greater

advance, recovering twenty villages, each of which was strongly defended.

The German reserves having been diverted from the original place of attack, Foch started the British forward again. On the 21st they made an advance along the Ancre, coming into their old battle ground of 1916 and 1917. The following day the British made a great attack on Albert. Beginning at five a. m. an assaulting column, supported by tanks, swept over the German defenses. Their advance was now irresistible. On the 23d, both Byng's and Rawlinson's armies went forward in a general advance of several miles, closing in on Bapaume. The Germans were now pushed back from their 1916 line, except in the south, where they still clung to some of their gains. But they were not to remain on the Somme for months, as before. On the 24th the British took Thiepval Ridge in a few hours. This was the fatal height that in 1916 held up their advance for three months.

On August 25th the British began a new attack, which will be taken up in the following chapter; they assailed and penetrated the Hindenburg line. Meanwhile they continued to push the Germans back from their March and April gains, sweeping forward on a thirty-mile front. The Germans now had no other aim than to place their armies safely behind the defenses of the Hindenburg line. It was now a question of saving their armies. They were compelled to fight constantly, losing men by thousands. The Allied attacks were pressed so fiercely that they could not remove the huge stores of munitions they had collected for a further offensive, but had to destroy or abandon them.

By August 28th both British and French were advancing in an unbroken line from Arras to Soissons. On the 29th the French took Noyon, and the British took Bapaume. The same day the British retook Delville Wood, a few miles from Bapaume. In the

first Battle of the Somme six months intervened between the taking of these two places. On this same day another considerable success was gained, this time by the Americans, who took the strategic town of Juvigny, north of Soissons. It was the Thirty-second division attached to Mangin's army that performed this feat. The capture was preceded by five days of the severest fighting, during which four German divisions successively attempted to hold back the one American division. The Germans were under the strictest orders to hold the town, which commanded the rear of the German line, but the men from Michigan and Wisconsin went ahead to their objective. Two thousand prisoners were taken. This success opened the way to further gains, which were quickly made by Mangin's army, and resulted a few days later in the Germans leaving the line of the Vesle, and all ground south of the Aisne.

The Germans were practically out of the Lys salient by the end of August, and were back in their old line in most places. On the 31st they evacuated Mont Kemmel, the possession of which in April foreshadowed a British disaster, barely averted. In the next few days the British recovered all their losses in the Ypres region. The recovery of the German gains of March, and the latter's retreat to the Hindenburg line, were now in the final stages. On August 30th the British took Combles, and on the following day the Australians stormed Mont St. Quentin, which gave them the town of Péronne a day later. In spite of the strength of the German position, the Australians took prisoners to the number of ten times their own losses.

And now a new British success east of Arras, where they were behind the Hindenburg line, caused that part of the German army that was still outside the line to retreat in the utmost haste. On September 6th the entire line from Rheims to Cambrai, a dis-

tance of ninety miles, was in motion. The Allies still followed closely, fighting whenever opportunity offered. Their advance on this day was about eight miles, which redeemed hundreds of square miles of French territory in a few hours.

From the 8th to the 15th of September the British, French, and Americans were engaged in recovering the remnants of the territory in front of the old German line. The great German success had been wiped out in disaster. The German war lords were back in the line from which they set out on March 21st, but they were much worse off than when they started. The Allies had captured nearly two hundred thousand prisoners since July 1st, while the casualties of the Germans had mounted beyond the million mark. In two months they had suffered one of the most amazing military reverses of history.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE REDEMPTION OF FRANCE.

The German line, in the middle of September, 1918, was in general the line upon which the German armies had stood for nearly four years. Near the North Sea it was exactly the same; around Ypres they still retained some of their 1918 gains; in the neighborhood of Arras they had lost territory; while from that place southeast to Rheims they occupied the Hindenburg line; and from Rheims to Switzerland they were on the same ground they had held since October, 1914. Only at the St. Mihiel salient had they lost territory.

It was the German hope and plan to hold this line for the next two or three months, or until winter should bring an end to campaigning. In view of their successful defense lasting several years this did not seem to be an extravagant hope. If Ludendorff could parry Foch's thrusts, the German statesmen



would have an apparently sound basis for a negotiated peace on the ground that the deadlock still existed and might continue for years. The German army had suffered heavily, but hardly worse so than the armies of the Allies. It was still well supplied with guns and shells, was still numerically able to man the line strongly, and yet have reserves.

The problem of Foch was to prevent the Germans from bringing their retreat to a halt and thus achieving a victory, even though it would be an entirely negative one. What he wanted to do was to break the new German line and push their armies back to the frontier, and thus demonstrate that no German line whatever could be held against the united strength of the Allies when directed by a single commander.

The plan of Foch was already apparent; it had been exemplified in his drives against the German salients. His intention was to operate the entire Allied army—French, British, American—as one force, to make no move that did not have a bearing on the campaign as a whole. His method was to strike many blows at widely separated points, but always against a weak spot in the enemy line, or else against a vital point. This was the opposite of the German method, which was to make one huge attack that took months to prepare; after it was delivered weeks were required to set the war machine on its wheels again, during which interval the enemy had time to recover.

The plan that promised the greatest results was to break through the Hindenburg line; to do this and advance to the Belgian frontier was to throw the Germans out of France, since success there would destroy their communications. The same end could be attained by sending the American army at Verdun northward, but Foch decided to make his main thrust against the strongest part of the German line, and to make it with the British army. The other armies, both French and American, would be used, but their



attacks would be for the purpose of keeping German reserves from the vicinity of the British attack. It was hardly reckoned as possible that the American army would actually succeed in its attack as the British did in theirs.

The new campaign that was to end in complete victory began on the 18th of September, when the British made a frontal attack on the Hindenburg line. Previous to that date, however, Byng's army had penetrated the famous defenses east of Arras on a limited front. On August 25th the British took advantage of the general confusion of the Germans during their great retreat, and by making a sudden attack they broke through the permanent defenses. The succeeding days saw them enlarging their gains, while on the first three days of September they made a still greater attack, going entirely beyond the Hindenburg line into territory that had seen no British soldier—save captives—since August, 1914. Here they encountered a second line called the Droecourt-Queant line, and they broke into this also, on a front of twenty miles, with a six-mile penetration at the deepest point. Ten thousand Germans were taken in this attack. This success put the British far behind the German lines, and was so dangerous to the latter that they collected enough reserves to hold the British in check.

By the 18th of September, however, Foch was ready to begin his main attack with all the armies in coöperation. From that date to about September 26th, Rawlinson's fourth army and the French army of Debeney attacked the defenses of St. Quentin. Each day saw them gain new positions, towns, or hills, or other strong places. This brought them to within three or four miles of the city. On September 27th General Byng's army assailed the Cambrai front in an advance twenty miles wide. Between that date and September 30th every hour saw fighting of the

most terrific character. British tanks and British cannon were used with terrible effect against the Germans, and British soldiers fought with the assurance that no position was impregnable. Two American divisions, the Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth, one composed of New York State National Guardsmen, the other of Southern mountaineers—"the Wildcat division"—fought with the British troops against the Germans at Cambrai and St. Quentin.

On the last day of September the Allies were at the outskirts of both cities. The fight for St. Quentin was especially severe. The Scheldt Canal with high banks formed a part of the Hindenburg line defenses. With machine guns commanding every yard of approach, the Germans fully expected to hold the canal against any odds, since it made a natural barrier against tanks. But Australians and Americans under cover of the British barrage fire took the canal and built bridges for the tanks. The French of Debeney's army were fighting equally well, and on October first they entered St. Quentin, from which the Germans had taken all of the fifty thousand French inhabitants.

While the British were smashing the outer defenses of the Germans at Cambrai, Foch had set the other armies in motion. Mangin's army, containing one American division, was fighting forward north of Soissons. They were at the edge of the German stronghold of the St. Gobain Forest, where their advance was made literally foot by foot. This was in reality one of the strongest points in the whole German line, and Foch did not care to sacrifice too many men in an attempt to carry it by quick assault. The resistance was of the strongest; any strategic point gained meant German counter attacks. By the end of September they had reached the famous Chemin des Dames position at its western end, although the Germans still held it throughout its greater length.

On September 26th Foch set the newly formed first American army in motion, far to the southeast of the crucible of Cambrai and St. Quentin. Gouraud's fourth French army fought in coöperation with Pershing's men. An account of this important battle will be found in the succeeding chapter.

At the same time another attack was begun on the extreme northern end of the battle front, where the Belgian army, which had been upon a quiet defensive since the first Battle of Ypres, now began an attack. With the Belgians was General Plumer's second British army. On the first day they made gains on a ten mile front between Dixmude and Ypres, capturing four thousand prisoners. On the second day the Belgians took Dixmude itself, which they had lost during the gigantic German attack in November, 1914. Their advance took them within two miles of Roulers, an important center which the British had long coveted. On September 30th the third day of the Flanders battle, the British recaptured for the last time the much fought for Messines-Passchendaele Ridge and advanced almost to the railroad junction at Menin. The liberation of Belgium was beginning.

On October 2d a French army commanded by General Degoutte appeared in the Flanders section, while the reorganized British fifth army—commanded by General Gough in the almost fatal Picardy attack in March, but now led by General Birdwood of Anzac fame—was also put into action on the same front. With the French were two American divisions, the Thirty-seventh, or Buckeye division, and the Ninety-first, or Wild West division. The men from Ohio and from the Pacific coast had been hastily withdrawn from the Argonne front, and sent to Belgium to aid this attack. The line of action was now extended southward, and a movement against the city of Lille was begun. The first few days were spent in gaining

the approaches to the city, after which the fighting died down for ten days.

These two widely separated attacks, coming at the same moment, demanded instant attention from the German high command. General Pershing's advance would cut this main line of communication if it were not checked; while the Belgian and British attack, if successful, would compel them to leave the Belgian coast. It was the last despairing crisis of the German commanders; they must stop these two forward movements or their cause was lost beyond repair. Reinforcements were rushed to both battle areas, and for a time succeeded in slowing up the Allied advance.

And now Foch's moment was come. By his masterly strategy he had driven back the enemy first at one point, then at another, had deprived him of all liberty of action, had compelled him to fight according to the best Allied interests. And now he had succeeded in the culmination of his strategy, that of compelling the enemy to weaken that point which Foch expected to attack. Hitherto the opposite had always happened; the place and time of attack were so heralded that the enemy could leisurely make his arrangements to meet it.

Foch now called upon the British armies of Byng and Rawlinson to break asunder the last remnants of the Hindenburg line. The defenses were still formidable, and the lines were amply defended. The Germans had called upon the collective ingenuity of their armies to render their position impregnable. Canals, rivers, hidden batteries, mines, dugouts, a concentration of thousands of guns, the protection afforded by buildings—all entered into the defensive properties of their strongest position.

The British armies—English, Irish, Scotch, Canadian and Australian—responded, eager to complete the great task assigned them. They had not for a day ceased to attack the German lines along their



front. Every half day saw a battle; any one of which, in size of territory, in numbers involved, and in casualties, equaled almost any battle in the history of wars. The Scheldt Canal, which was the chief defense of St. Quentin, was the mainstay of the Hindenburg line throughout its length, and it had to be crossed everywhere. The British swam across, or ferried themselves over on rafts, always under fire. The banks of the canal were one hundred feet high in places, a more easily defended position could not be desired. At the town of Bellicourt, where the canal passes under a ridge through a tunnel several miles long, the Thirtieth American division, still attached to the British, assaulted and carried the ditch, almost a cañon in dimensions, receiving the enthusiastic praise of their own and the British commanders.

By the end of the first week in October the British had penetrated all but the last lines of the immensely broad belt of fortifications comprising the Hindenburg line. And on October 8th the full strength of Byng's and Rawlinson's armies was thrown against the German positions. In fighting not surpassed in any battle they penetrated the last prepared defenses of their enemies, and despite the utmost efforts of thirty German divisions, they won their way through. By the 9th they had fought their way into and beyond the city of Cambrai, had advanced nine miles throughout a width of twenty miles, and on October 10th the Hindenburg line was but a memory, all its strong places broken, its fortifications crumbled, and its defenders scattered.

A German army was in full and rapid retreat that was little short of rout. The shaken armies choked the roads, abandoning nearly all their supplies that had not been previously withdrawn. British and French planes harried their march with bombs, and British cavalry scoured the country for stragglers. It was the finest achievement of the British army in



centuries, surpassing tenfold any other English battle, in point of numbers involved, while it will rank with Crécy, Agincourt, Blenheim, and Waterloo as an immortal page in British history.

To the German high command the destruction of the Hindenburg line was a warning that the end was near. What three weeks before had seemed certain—namely, the holding of their position until winter—was now not only impossible, but the very line was disrupted and the armies necessary to defense were badly beaten and disheartened. There was still another line to fall back upon, the line of the Meuse River, which runs through Verdun and along the French frontier to Belgium, thence through the north-eastern part of that country. The Germans had long ago prepared that line as an eventuality, and they now were compelled to resort to it. But while the holding of the Hindenburg line would have had a measure of triumph, the retirement to the Meuse was tantamount to a confession of defeat.

The French armies of Mangin and Gouraud, which had been attacking the center of the German line along the Aisne, gained increasing momentum during the first days of October. The German position here formed a great curved line as it came south from Belgium through St. Quentin and turned almost east near Soissons and Rheims. The city of Laon, the forest of St. Gobain, at the apex of the curved line, constituted the keystone of the German position in France. It was against this arch that half of the strength of French armies had been exerted during all the years of the war. Each year had seen a new and greater effort to break through at this point, but the progress had been measured by scant miles. Neville and Pétain, in 1917, had pushed it forward to the Chemin des Dames, only to see all their gains swept away in May, 1918. Now, in September and October, the French were slowly recovering the lost

ground and beginning to encroach on new territory. On the last day of September, General Mangin had just reached a point from which he commanded the western end of the Chemin des Dames, and was encroaching on the great St. Gobain Forest. On the right of Mangin, General Berthelot's army worked its way round to the other end of the line north of Rheims. With General Berthelot was an attachment of several thousand Italians. These forces met with severe resistance, but pressed on in their skillful advance. By the 5th the Germans were being outflanked from both sides and began to withdraw. This retreat was hastened by the fall of Cambrai and the breaking of the Hindenburg line, since the British advance threatened to cut off the Germans in the Laon salient.

Mangin's advance was rapid now, and by October 12th he had pushed forward several miles. The following day the entire German line crumpled, and the three objectives, that hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen had vainly died to gain, fell into Mangin's hands. These were Laon, La Fère, and the St. Gobain Forest. The French armies in this sector now made a steady advance after the retreating Germans, who fought only rear-guard actions for a time.

On the east of Rheims, during the same period, General Gouraud's fourth army was undergoing the same difficult but increasingly rapid advance. In all his fighting he kept pace with General Pershing's army in the Argonne Forest. The latter had the harder task, and, as a whole, their section of the battle front was not greatly affected by the British success in the north. It was upon their own unaided efforts that success depended. But Gouraud and Pershing fought ever forward, day after day. It was not until the 10th of October that Gouraud's advance was at all rapid. The Second division of Americans was fighting with him; the Marines still constituting a part of

it. About the 7th this division took by assault a very strong German position, Blanc Mont Ridge, causing an immediate German retreat of three miles. October 9th the Second division was relieved by the Thirty-sixth division. Gouraud's army after that date advanced steadily, keeping in touch with Berthelot on the west and Pershing on the east. Every day saw French towns delivered from their long bondage, a sad deliverance often, as the French found only ruins where prosperous towns and villages had once been.

It was the far north end of the battle line that held most of the world's interest during the middle of October. The advance of the Belgians, English, and French in Flanders brought more visible results to the waiting public. The first advance from September 28th on had made a small salient between Lille and the sea, that instantly aroused the Germans to the necessity of evacuating the Belgian coast. A farther advance by the Allies would cut them off from their submarine bases and entail the loss of their vast material. Their departure was hastened, and all movable supplies were carried away.

On October 14th the Allies resumed their attacks in this region, in a general advance between Lille and the sea. So rapidly did they sweep forward that every German position was overrun all along the line. The evacuation of Lille had been begun many days before, and under the new advances the Germans quickly departed. Lille was entered by General Birdwood's army on October 17th. This unfortunate French city had heard the Allies' guns during all the weary months, and the people always hoped for the advance that month after month never came. They heard the roar of the great battles of Ypres, of Loos, of Arras, of Vimy Ridge, of Messines, and each new battle promised to deliver them from the German yoke. The saddest days were those that heard the battles receding, as their champions retreated before the Ger-

man onslaught. But now the invader had gone, forever, be it hoped. Joy, tempered with deepest sadness, was in every countenance as the British entered. But it was the French that Lille longed to see, and when a few French officers arrived their fellow countrymen went wild with delight.

The same day that witnessed the deliverance of Lille also saw the evacuation of Ostend and a part of the Belgian coast. A British naval force entered the same day. The following day the rest of the coast line, including Zeebrugge, the great submarine base, was cleared of the enemy, and on the 19th the battle line ended, not on the North Sea, but on the Dutch frontier. The Belgians were near Ghent in another day or so.

This great success in Belgium was perhaps the first intimation the non-military public, especially in the United States, had that the end of the war was at hand. The evacuation of the Belgian coast was so great a triumph, so deadly a blow at German power, that its value was seen by all. The ten days ending October 18th had seen the most amazing Allied victories of the whole war. Cambrai, Lens, Lille had been captured, Rheims and Verdun delivered from bombardment, the Hindenburg line shattered, and the Belgian coast cleared of the enemy.

The whole Allied line from the Dutch frontier to Verdun was now in motion; nowhere were the Germans able to stop, and their chief aim was to place themselves behind the Meuse. On October 17th the town of Douai was taken by the British. This was a very remote objective in the 1916 Battle of the Somme; but now it had only a passing value. From this date onward, the British armies were marching toward Valenciennes and the Belgian border; the Belgians were fighting forward to Brussels; the French armies in the center, and Pershing's army at the right,

were headed for the French frontier and the communications of the German army.

What had for years been the great dream of Germany—to hold northern France with its industries, its coal and iron fields—was a dream of the past. The utmost efforts of the German commanders were now expended in extricating their armies from the land to gain which they had wasted millions of lives. The redemption of France was being rapidly accomplished.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### AMERICAN FIGHTING MEN.

The American army made all the difference between victory and, if not defeat, at least deadlock. The tremendous victory of 1918 and the triumphant end of the war would not have been possible without the soldiers of the United States. The war would have been continued into 1919, and the result would most likely have been decided by the attrition of one of the opposing nations rather than by a victory in the field.

The American army went to Europe with a great inheritance of military history, and by the achievements of their ancestors they would be measured. The grandsons of Lee's army fought beside the grandsons of Grant's men. The fifth generation from Revolutionary days was called upon to fight against a tyranny a hundred times more oppressive than that against which the men of 1776 had rebelled. The American army of 1918 went to battle inspired by the memories of Bunker Hill and Yorktown, of New Orleans, of Shiloh, Chancellorville, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness.

Even more inspiring was the knowledge that they were crusaders, with a mission to free France and Belgium from the grip of the Hun. It was knightly enthusiasm for the righting of the others' wrongs.



They sailed across the Atlantic eager to join the fray, but it was not until they had seen the handiwork of the ruthless Germans that the battle fever possessed them. The sight of burned villages, of magnificent cathedrals wantonly destroyed, of the uprooting of fruit farms, the defilement of French homes, and above all the stories of the wrongs done to women and children, fired them with the same rage that had filled the French, Belgians, and British soldiers in the early days of the war, a rage that gave way to a cold ferocity. There were no advocates of a negotiated peace in the American Expeditionary Force.

There were those who feared that a fighting American army, such as Grant or Lee commanded, was no longer possible. They thought the great influx of immigrants, that had put the Anglo-Saxon stock almost in a minority, was calculated to deprive America of a common aim, of common ideals, and therefore of a common fighting spirit. But their fears were not realized. The men from the tenement districts of New York—Jews, Poles, Greeks—fought equally well with the Kansans, who had generations of American ancestry; the Scandinavians of the Northwest were not excelled by the Wildcat division, whose forefathers were English two hundred years ago; the boys with German names from Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Cincinnati fought as bravely as the most purely American troops from Vermont or Texas.

In 1914 the French soldiers were compelled to rush from their homes directly into battle, while British troops were not always given full training, so great was the need in the early days of the war. But months elapsed between the landing of the United States troops and their entry into battle. More than nine months passed before the first selective service men were sent into a fight. This period was spent in fitting the men for their ordeal. The subsequent actions proved how thorough the preparation had been.

The first action of importance in which American troops were engaged was at Seicheprey, a village located on the southern side of the St. Mihiel salient. It was near this town that Joan of Arc was born. On April 20, 1918, the Germans concentrated a force that gave them an eight-to-one advantage, and laying down a heavy barrage fire, they rushed the positions of some New England troops. The Germans penetrated more than a mile into the American line, taking one hundred and eighty-three prisoners. The Americans fought well, counter attacked at once, and recovered all of the lost ground and rescued some of their men. The Germans left three hundred dead upon the field.

When the German offensive of March and April threatened to disrupt the Allied line every trained American division was called to the front. The First division was placed in reserve near Montdidier, and later was moved into battle trenches. There, on May 28th, the American soldiers carried out their first offensive action. With the German positions in the town of Cantigny as their objective, the First division men attacked after a bombardment, in which heavy guns, trench mortars, gas and flame projectors were used. A smoke barrage protected the men from the enemy fire, and tanks cleared the way. The action was brief and highly successful. The Americans took all their objectives in a rush, and captured about two hundred prisoners. It was a small action in a big war, involving only a mile and a quarter of the front, but the officers of the First division put all their thought into the preparation, and the men all their dash into the carrying out of their plans. It was a first proof of American fighting spirit.

It was not until the Germans won their victory of May 27th and created the Marne salient that American troops were sent into critical battles. The part they played in checking the German advance through

Château-Thierry has already been recounted. The first American unit to arrive at the point of action was the motorized machine gun battalion of the third division. The men and guns kept the bridge across the Marne through an extremely vital day, holding the Germans until reënforcements came. The bravery and dash of the Marines at Belleau Wood so impressed the French that they rechristened the wood after the American Marine Corps. The fighting here was of the closest character, calling for personal bravery. The Marines fought without the slightest regard for their losses, and dug individual bomb proofs and pits. More than half their number were listed as casualties before the wood was taken. Their commander, Colonel Catlin, was wounded, but recovered.

Every trained division took part in the first great offensive of the Allies, that of July 18th. The part each division played has been outlined in brief in a preceding chapter. The first day's attack began in a thunderstorm, when the artillery of the heavens mingled with that of the French and Americans. In the days that followed the men fought through forests, over harvest fields, where the Germans had reaped the grain sowed by French farmers, and through villages where every house was a machine-gun nest. The Americans quickly learned the deadly nature of machine guns, and many were the devices whereby they circumvented them. Tanks were not always available to overcome them, and, if nothing else served, the Americans rushed the machine guns. It was always the pick of the German army that was left behind with machine guns to guard the retreat, and the Germans usually fought to the death.

American ingenuity was shown in the motorized machine-gun battalions, popularly called the "Ford Cavalry." There was never any delay in bringing up the guns. Later field guns were mounted on a tank-like carriage that was independent of roads and

could cross any kind of country. This was of immense value in the rough territory in which the Americans fought in the later actions.

The Americans who fought with the British and French armies won the heartiest praise from officers, and the kindest fellowship from the men of the Allied armies. The Thirty-second division, with Mangin's army, in August and September earned the sobriquet of "*Les Terribles*," from their feat in capturing Juvigny from four German divisions.

The American army was largely dependent upon the French for big guns, aëroplanes, and tanks. This dependency was being rapidly removed as the war closed, and would have been entirely so in 1919. The first American air action, made by American aviators in American-made planes, was on August 7th, when eighteen planes raided the German lines, all returning in safety. About nineteen hundred American planes were sent to France, while two thousand two hundred and seventy-six planes were used. British squadrons also aided the Americans.

The American air service lost some of its noted fighters in 1918. Major Raoul Lufberry and Captain James Norman Hall were killed. Both of these officers had been members of the Lafayette Escadrille. Lieutenant Quentin Roosevelt was killed on July 14th, his plane falling within the Marne salient.

After Foch's first counter offensive, Pershing withdrew most of the divisions that were serving under French and British commanders, and on August 10th organized the first American army, under his personal command. On August 30th the American army took charge of its first considerable section of the battle line, comprising about fifty miles. This sector included the whole of the St. Mihiel salient, southeast of Verdun.

This salient was now of four years' standing. It had always been a menace to Verdun and, what was



of more consequence now, its possession by the Germans made unsafe the future operations planned by the American army northward through the Argonne Forest. The reduction of the salient was the first step toward the great campaign of the United States troops.

From the time the first Americans came to the Lorraine sector the salient had occupied their attention, and it had long been agreed that their first action of importance should be the taking of this German wedge. Fate, in the shape of the German offensive, willed otherwise, and Château-Thierry will stand as the general name of America's first great battle on European soil. But after five months the Americans were ready to undertake their first independent offensive.

The Battle of St. Michiel was planned as a surprise, and all concentrations of troops and supplies were made secretly; and, as it proved, the Germans actually were surprised, which in view of the preparation, the assembly of tanks and transports, the placing of hundreds of big guns, the location of special hospitals, and the presence of several hundred thousand men, was a staff operation of the first rank. The aviators engaged were the most numerous of any one action during the war.

Three American corps, one of which had only one American division, the other being French, and a French colonial corps were stationed around the salient as combat troops. The American divisions in line were the First, Second, and Fifth, of the regular army, the Twenty-sixth and Forty-second of National Guard troops, and the Eighty-second, Eighty-ninth, and Ninetieth of selective service men. All but one of these, the Twenty-sixth, were in line along the south side of the salient, from which side the principal attack was to be made. It was the first time the draft division composed of men from Camp Gordon, Camp Funston, and Camp Travis were in action.



The Battle of the St. Mihiel salient began at five a. m. on September 12th, after a four-hour artillery preparation which left the Germans in no condition for defense. When the American divisions advanced they met with so little resistance that it was almost a disappointment to troops primed for battle. The new men of the draft divisions who were keyed up for their first battle found themselves merely marching forward over what had been the German defenses. The tanks were ahead driving the enemy before them, while intrepid Americans were everywhere cutting the barbed wire that the tanks had failed to break down. By seven a. m. the Americans from the south were five miles inside the German lines, and were closing the mouth of the salient. Prisoners by the thousands were taken; in one instance a German regiment was captured intact, and its colonel asked to be allowed to march it off the field.

On the west the French and Americans were making slower progress owing to the nature of the ground. Strongly defended hills barred their path, but by evening the hills were taken, and the troops pushed on through the night. By morning only a small gap remained, through which the German commanders were hurrying their troops. This gap was entirely closed during the second day's battle, and there remained only to hunt down the German troops left in the trap. When this was done, it was discovered that the Americans had taken sixteen thousand Germans captive, with a loss to themselves of about seven thousand, including the slightly wounded. The dead and seriously wounded numbered scarcely a thousand.

This brilliant action, lasting a day and a half, was one of the most successful of the whole war. General Byng's action at Cambrai in November, 1917, might have compared with it, but for his unfortunate setback. There was no aftermath to this battle. The Germans were overwhelmed and had not the power

to win back their gains. It was the first time during the war that the Germans suffered a defeat without attempting to regain the lost ground. This alone marked the waning power of the enemy. The result of the battle is summed up in General Pershing's words: "The Allies found they had a formidable army to aid them, and the enemy learned finally that he had one to reckon with."

On the same day that the Battle of St. Michiel was fought, more than thirteen million Americans registered for military service. If the battle was a severe blow to the German army, the registration was an equally severe blow to German statesmen. It compelled them to realize that America was out to win the war at any cost, and that their cause was lost beyond repair. America's intention, proclaimed aloud, of sending four million soldiers to Europe, effectually smothered any remaining hope the Germans may have had.

Two weeks after this battle the American army began its one great campaign. It broke the backbone of the German position in France, even more decisively than the British did when they broke the Hindenburg line. The position the Americans were now to assail was the most difficult to attack, the easiest to defend, of any part of the front. The hilly, densely wooded region of the Argonne Forest began west of Verdun. It was some twenty miles deep from north to south, and extended westward some miles. The new American front was bounded on the east by the Meuse River, which flows obliquely past, and on the west by the farther side of the Argonne Forest, and by General Gouraud's French army. Some miles north was the main line of communication of the German armies in France. A highly developed railroad system and several parallel motor roads came out of Germany and ran along the northern frontier of France, feeding the armies from Verdun northward. It was along

the Argonne Forest that the established battle line was nearest the vital German supply line, but so strong were the German defenses that the French had made only one serious attempt to pierce them.

It was this very hard task that was assigned to the American army, and it was undertaken in the spirit that the most difficult operation properly belonged to it. Even greater preparations were made for this battle since this would be no one-day affair. The utmost secrecy was observed; although the morning of September 26th was the time fixed for the beginning of the campaign, it was not until after nightfall on September 25th that the Americans took over the front line trenches from the French. Everything had been prepared in advance.

Three army corps, the First, Third, and Fifth, were assigned for the beginning of the battle. Each corps had three divisions as combat troops, these divisions being from west to east, Seventy-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Thirty-fifth, Ninety-first, Thirty-seventh, Seventy-ninth, Fourth, Eightieth, and Thirty-third. Only one of these was a regular army division, four were National Guard, and four were selective service divisions. For the great majority of these troops it was their first battle. After a brief bombardment the twenty-five-mile line swept forward early in the morning of September 26th. They advanced over the battle-scarred ground, opened gaps in barbed wire, swarmed into and over German trenches in overwhelming numbers; the towns of Varennes and Montfaucon were taken the first day, in an advance of three to seven miles. The advance continued through September 27th and 28th, until the troops were past the first, second, and third system of defenses and out into open country, if the term could be applied to a forest land. Ten thousand prisoners was one result of the first three days' advance.

The army now consolidated its position, knowing

that the Germans would throw every available division against it, in a desperate attempt to throw back the Americans, or at least to hold them to their ground. The worst that could happen to the German army would be an interrupted advance in this region. It was incredible to the German high command that "raw troops" should have pushed through the entire defensive area of their army in two days' time. The most peremptory orders were issued to hold all ground at any cost; officers were instructed to inspire their men with the knowledge that on their efforts depended the future of the empire. Counter attacks began after September 28th, and the Germans threw large masses of men against the Americans, deluged the low positions with gas, but without regaining anything of value. The advance of the United States troops never entirely stopped, although for a week the gains were measured in yards rather than in miles. The troops fought continuously day and night, through days of cold rain, cut off from warm rations.

The second phase of the campaign began on October 4th when Pershing resumed his driving advance, accomplishing new gains of one to three miles. Here again it was necessary to pause to beat off the terrific counter attacks through several days following. The struggle had been so exhausting that about this time the Thirty-fifth, Ninety-first, Thirty-seventh, and Seventy-ninth divisions were withdrawn. Their places were taken by the First, Thirty-second, and the Third. The Thirty-seventh and Ninety-first divisions were sent to Belgium to fight under a French commander, and were seen no more in the Argonne. Besides the relief divisions, new men were constantly being incorporated in the other divisions, as casualties depleted their ranks.

It was during this period that the memorable incident of the "Lost Battalion" occurred. Several hundred men of the Seventy-seventh division crept forward in a night advance, but found themselves sur-

rounded and cut off from their own lines. The Germans fired upon them from all sides, expecting that a surrender would follow promptly. But the New Yorkers fought back and held their positions against all attacks. Their food gave out, in spite of efforts to supply them by aëroplane. Lieutenant Colonel Whittlesey, their leader, consigned the Germans to the nether regions when surrender was demanded. They were relieved at last by the American advance. On October 9th General Pershing completed the organization of the second American army, assigning it a section of the front to the east of the Meuse. Lieutenant General Hunter Liggett now assumed command of the combat forces of the Argonne-Meuse battle; while Lieutenant General Robert L. Bullard commanded the newly formed army; General Pershing remaining commander in chief.

The first army was now facing another system of defenses, the Kriemhilde line, and once more they were compelled to fight their way forward. In one place, however, they made a sudden and considerable gain. This was on the far western end of the battle-front, where, on October 9th and 10th, the Seventy-seventh division, aided by the Eighty-second, newly thrown in, cleared the remaining section of the forest of Argonne, winning their way into the open country beyond and closing in on the important town of Grand Pré.

The week of October 10th to 17th saw the army fighting into the Kriemhilde line. The Germans now had five times as many divisions in this region as when the campaign began. Herein is the great success of the Americans thus far: they were drawing thousands of German troops from in front of the French and British. The armies of Byng, Rawlinson, Debeney, and Mangin would not have won their great successes so easily had not Pershing's men consumed the reserves of Ludendorff. Division after division



was thrown into the path of the Americans, only to be crushed and beaten.

The Americans were amazed at the intricate defenses they saw. The trenches which the Germans had occupied for four years were cemented and roofed; the officers' dugouts were luxuriously furnished and lighted by electricity. The boys from Georgia, Oregon, Texas, Kansas, and the other States fought under the worst weather conditions; rain continued for weeks, and guns had to be moved through mud. The ten days following October 18th were spent in breaking the last defenses of the Kriemhilde line. Days were occupied in an advance of a scant mile, in the taking or holding of a strong point. During this same period, the Americans east of the Meuse made new gains against the Germans. During that week the Germans fired their last shells into Verdun, their target for years. On October 26th some mammoth American naval guns began to bombard the German line of communications. These sixteen-inch guns were the equal of anything the Germans possessed. In a few more months there would have been a considerable number of them.

On the last day of October and the first day of November the German line broke. Worn out by the American attacks, unable to throw in fresh divisions, the holding troops no longer strong enough to resist, the German line gave way. The Americans, after two weeks of stationary fighting, suddenly made great sweeps forward in the center, and after November 2d the left wing also advanced. Five miles were made in the course of a single day, the Americans in scores of motor trucks pursuing the beaten enemy. The fourth French army of General Gouraud had fought at the American left during the whole campaign, had kept in line week by week. Now there was friendly rivalry between the French and Americans to reach their goal first—the German railway at Sedan.

The American divisions that were now engaged were the Seventy-seventh, Seventy-eighth, Eightieth, Second, and Eighty-ninth, besides some divisions across the Meuse. It was the Seventy-seventh division that won the goal, and on November 6th it reached the Meuse opposite Sedan, commanding the vital German line of communications. Adjoining them, the Forty-second, the famous Rainbow division, pushed in closer to Sedan. The American campaign was over, in the most complete success imaginable. Every goal set for it had been gained.

The American victory was decisive. It made further German resistance impossible. The defeats in Belgium and along the British front were enough to insure a complete victory, but the Germans, if they chose, could have continued the war through the winter along the line of the Meuse, or by continuing their slow retreat to the Rhine. But the American victory ended all possibility of this. One of the two main lines of communications, and the more important one, was severed; retreat to Germany by the most direct route was blocked, and the Meuse River as a place of refuge was not available, since the Americans occupied it. Nothing remained for the German army but to attempt to crowd through the single gateway of Liège, which was impossible, in view of the fact that a great part of the German army was farther from it than the nearest Allied forces—or, to surrender.

Henceforth Americans will have a greater battle than Antietam or Gettysburg to recount. In this greatest of American battles three-quarters of a million soldiers fought. First and last, twenty-one divisions were used, the following being the honor roll: First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, of the regular army; the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, Thirty-second, Thirty-third, Thirty-fifth, Thirty-seventh, Forty-second, of the National Guard; and the Seventy-seventh, Seventy-eighth, Seventy-ninth,

Eightieth, Eighty-ninth, Ninetieth, and Ninety-first, of the National Army. Eight of these divisions were in battle twice. The Seventy-seventh, the famous New York City division, was the only one that began and ended the long series of battles. Taken out in October for a short rest, it was in each of the big advances, and finally reached the Meuse near Sedan.

Of all the American divisions, the Second suffered the largest number of casualties, nearly twenty-five thousand, or a little less than its original number. It fought in every American battle except St. Mihiel, and in a number of French battles besides. The casualties of the First division were nearly as great, while the Third division, the Twenty-eighth, Pennsylvania, the Thirty-second, Michigan and Wisconsin, and the Forty-second, Rainbow, divisions, all suffered casualties in excess of twelve thousand. Of the draft divisions the Ninetieth, Texas and Oklahoma, and the Seventy-seventh, lost the most men.

The United States casualties were much lighter than the country had any reason to hope for, in view of the millions killed and wounded of other nations. Small Belgium and Serbia suffered more heavily than did the American army. The number of Americans killed, including those that died of their wounds, was thirty-six thousand one hundred and fifty-four, less than a third of the Civil War dead of the Union army alone. The total number of battle casualties was less than two hundred and forty thousand. The Americans captured forty-four thousand Germans, or more than their own killed, losing about three thousand three hundred men in prisoners and missing; fourteen hundred German guns were taken. About forty German divisions opposed the Americans in the six weeks' Argonne-Meuse campaign.

There were in France at the end of the war, three American armies of three corps each, or more than one million three hundred thousand combat troops, of

which less than a million were in action. Many American units—infantry regiments, artillery, battalions, et cetera—spent long months in training, were sent to France to complete their training and had arrived behind the battle lines within sound of the guns when hostilities ceased and their opportunity for active service was gone. The American second army was all set for an offensive in November. Its objectives were Metz and the Briey iron fields. The latter supplied Germany with eighty per cent of her iron; deprived of the source of supply, she could not have continued the war.

The American preparations for continuing the war were so tremendous, so overwhelming even in the eyes of a nation fostered in militarism, that more than anything else they broke the will of the German people.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### GERMANY'S EMPIRE DESTROYED—HER ALLIES SURRENDER.

The influence of Germany's defeats in France was nowhere felt more strongly than in the countries of her allies. Not one of Germany's co-partners in conquest, half subject though they were, had any real interest in German ambitions. The realization of her dream of empire would have been as fatal to Hungary as to France, as repressive to Bulgaria as to Serbia, as blighting to Turkey as to Belgium.

The alliance of the Central Powers was a compact between autocratic rulers, not an association between free peoples. In Austria-Hungary the monarch, and above all, his centuries-old system of aristocracy was the governing force, and their authority had long ago been seized by Germany. In Bulgaria, by inheritance friendly to Russia and England, the Czar Ferdinand bartered his army and nation for his own pro-



spective gain. He aspired to the overlordship of the Balkans. In this he was only half a tool of Germany. He had plans that were not in agreement with Germany's. In Turkey a small ring of powerful leaders had usurped authority; in 1914 they decided that Germany would win the war, and cast their lot with the Teutonic Empire, with an eye for booty only.

Having bound themselves to Germany's chariot, they had to stand or fall with her as the war continued. German control became more and more absolute, as each military aid and each shipment of munitions deepened their obligation, a debt Germany was careful to secure. But when German armies began to meet defeat, and the German lines everywhere fell back, all feeling of loyalty, and nearly all semblance of it, vanished, and each country decided to look out for its own interests.

The Allied campaign against the Central Powers had now continued for four years, and, except in the case of Turkey's outlying possessions, had been fruitless. Italian lines in the summer of 1918 were far back of the positions of 1915; the campaigns against Bulgaria had made no progress in nearly three years. Only against Turkey's far-flung outposts was there any success. This lack of success, however, was only geographical. In reality it was a contest of endurance, and Turkey, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary were losing even while their armies stood or advanced. The effect of the strain was great, and determined in advance the outcome of the final battles.

The authority of Marshal Foch was extended, during the summer, over all the Allied armies in Italy, the Balkans, Palestine, and elsewhere. As soon as it was apparent that he had wrested the initiative from the Germans, Foch arranged for offensive operations upon all fronts to begin at appointed times.

The attacks on the Salonica front and in Palestine began almost simultaneously. On September 15th



the Allied army in the Balkans, commanded by the French general D'Esperey, assailed the enemy. The opposing army was composed largely of Bulgarians, with many Austrians and a few Germans. The attack was in the center of the battle line, or from Lake Doiran westward beyond Monastir. The British and Greek troops fought on the right, the Serbs and French in the center, and a considerable Italian force assailed the Austrians in Albania in order to prevent reserves being sent to aid Bulgaria.

The Allies were successful from the start. The first day an advance of five miles was made, which in three days was increased to ten miles. Forty-five villages were taken. The assault was pressed hard; on September 21st the Serbs advanced nine miles through the center of the line. The Bulgarians were now in a perilous position. The advance in the center was cutting their army in two; two days later this actually occurred, when the Serbs captured Prilep, and pushed between the first and second Bulgarian armies. This in itself was decisive. The army on the west could not retreat to safety, and its capture or destruction was inevitable.

The moment the Allied success was of serious proportions, King Ferdinand called upon Germany and Austria for aid, which was promised. But neither Germany nor Austria could send aid, although news "escaped" of a large German force being rushed to the Balkans. In 1916, or 1917, such an event would have actually occurred, but that time was now past. And when it was seen that no help was coming from Germany, the Bulgarian people arose en masse and demanded that the government make peace with the Allies. Accordingly, on September 27th, the French commander received a request for a meeting to conclude an armistice. The envoys were received on September 28th; the armistice was signed on the 29th, and submitted to the Entente governments. Approval

was given and hostilities ceased at noon on September 30th. Bulgaria surrendered to the mercies of the Allied governments.

The terms of the armistice, which were strictly military, provided for the evacuation by Bulgaria of all Greek, Serbian, and Roumanian territory; for the demobilization of the army, and the surrender of all munitions. The Allies were to be allowed free passage through Bulgaria in their campaigning.

Coming as it did hard upon the heels of Foch's first victories in France, the elimination of Bulgaria was hailed as a mighty triumph and as a forerunner of the defeat of the remaining enemies. The importance of Bulgaria's surrender is seen in the map. It was the link between Germany and her empire beyond the Golden Horn. The breaking of the link cut Germany off from Turkey. The mighty German Empire which, in September, extended from the North Sea to the plains of Asia, ended, in October, at the Danube River in Central Europe. More than two thousand miles of empire were conquered, actually or prospectively, at a single blow.

The Allies were now free to begin an attack against either Austria-Hungary or Turkey. Such an attack coming from new vantage points could not fail of success. The mere threat was enough to cause an enemy collapse. The Serbs had penetrated to Uskub by the time of the armistice. They were now well within their own country again, advancing through the land that, in 1915, they had been compelled under such bitter conditions to leave. On October 13th they reached Nish, their war-time headquarters, and before the Austrian armistice they had recovered their capital, Belgrade. Serbia, too, was redeemed.

In Palestine, General Allenby had made no great advance since his capture of Jerusalem the previous December. He was at first compelled to defend the

Holy City from Turkish attacks in force, but early in the year he pushed forward, going first to the River Jordan and capturing Jericho.

He had plans almost completed for an offensive campaign when nearly all his English troops were withdrawn to help stem the German flood in France. This made reorganization and new preparations necessary. In the autumn he was once more ready.

In September the British had reached a line about halfway between Jerusalem and Samaria. Across the very heart of Biblical Palestine their lines extended, east and west of Jordan. On the right, east of Jordan, an army of Arabs aided the British. Facing the British was a Turkish army of one hundred thousand, well munitioned, well officered. General Allenby planned the utter defeat of this army.

His preparations were vast; the greatest pains were taken to have every unit ready, every contingency provided for. In spite of their lines being stretched across an open country—the barren land foretold by the prophets of Israel—General Allenby and his staff determined to make a surprise attack. Troops were moved only by night, were kept concealed by day in orange and olive groves. The machinery of attack, tanks, aeroplanes, motor transport, and artillery, were brought up by easy stages. Mounts for a large cavalry force were provided. British aeroplanes kept the enemy from observation of the area back of the lines.

The attack began on September 18th; the entire line was assailed, with success everywhere except near the Jordan. By the 19th a sixteen-mile break was opened in the Turkish line between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. And now was seen the vital part of General Allenby's preparations. In a war in which cavalry was hardly ever seen, he had provided a large cavalry force. If only infantry had been available, the Turkish army could have retreated from one position to another, as occurred in other battle-

fields. But into the gap that the infantry had made, General Allenby sent his cavalry; Australian light horse and Indian horsemen. The latter were in their native costume, bizarre elsewhere, but fitting as a part of an Oriental scene. Over the plains of Sharon, beloved by the Psalmist, over the battlefield of Esdraelon of Old Testament history, past Mount Carmel, that has looked down upon the conflicts of ten thousand years, went the cavalry in a sixty-mile advance, cutting the enemy's line of retreat. By September 22d the Turkish army had virtually ceased to exist, was only a mob of panic-stricken men.

British aëroplanes aided greatly in turning the defeat into a disorganized rout. Observing the main line of retreat filled with Turkish troops marching in good order, they swooped down within two hundred feet of the ground, and with bombs directed especially upon the guns and vehicles, they scattered the enemy, sending the men into the hills. More than seventy thousand prisoners were eventually gathered in, which, with the Turkish casualties, accounted for the entire army. There was never a more sweeping victory. It was a triumph "without a morrow." When the battle was over there was no more enemy.

This battle virtually ended Turkish resistance. There was no other large Turkish army in existence except the remnant of the force that was being pushed back in Mesopotamia. On September 23d Nazareth, which, as the earthly home of Christ, is the most famous town in Palestine, next to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, was captured. The tiny Sea of Galilee was cleared of Turkish stragglers, and the army pressed northward as rapidly as possible. On October 1st Damascus, one hundred and eighty miles north, was captured. Allenby's objective was now the city of Aleppo, which is near the extreme northeast corner of the Mediterranean. The Bagdad railway runs through Aleppo, and once the lines were broken the



Turks in Mesopotamia would be cut off from aid. Allenby took Aleppo on October 26th, the second of the Allied commanders to reach his final objective. Before this Turkey had asked for an armistice, and on October 31st a pact was signed that marked the exit of Turkey from the war, and signaled the disappearance of the Turkish Empire as a political power.

The terms imposed on Turkey were: the opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus with the surrender of all fortifications along the straits; the demobilization of the army and the surrender of all naval vessels; withdrawal from Persia and the Caucasus, with conditions governing Armenia and other matters.

The two arch assassins, Talast and Enver—Nana Sahibs on a scale ten thousand times increased—fled with such wealth as they could remove. On November 13th a British and French fleet sailed through the Dardanelles and anchored off Constantinople. What Sir Ian Hamilton had failed to accomplish at Gallipoli in 1915, Sir Edmund H. H. Allenby performed in Palestine in 1918.

A very multitude of blows, any one of which would have been fatal, were thus being delivered to the German Empire. The surrender of Bulgaria would have meant the submission of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, had that not been otherwise accomplished. The defeat of Turkey would likewise have assured the downfall of Bulgaria. The collective potency of these blows would have brought Germany to terms, even had the armies in France been less victorious.

Austria-Hungary never recovered from the rough handling her armies received in 1916 at the hands of the Russians. It was more and more necessary for Germany to control Austrian military affairs, if the strength of the Dual Kingdom were to be used on Germany's behalf. The Austrian army was put under the control of the German general staff, and German



officers were assigned to each Austrian unit, often becoming the real commanders. The heavy blow dealt Italy at Caporetto in the autumn of 1917 was of German planning and direction.

The collapse of Russia had relieved Austria even as it had relieved Germany. The majority of the troops were removed from the Russian front, some of them being incorporated into German armies in France, but most of them being sent to the Italian front. There they underwent reorganization, and during long months were prepared for a new offensive upon Italy.

This was to be Austria's greatest offensive. For the first time, the entire strength and resources of the Austrian army and nation were to be used against Italy. It was thought that another attack on a grand scale would be productive of even greater success than that of the previous autumn. Germany's forty-mile advances in France, breaking the deadlock, inspired the Austrian commanders to emulation. Practically all German troops had been withdrawn; the attack rested on Austria alone.

The Italian lines were in the same general positions they occupied after the great retreat. In the early months of 1918 the Italians made a local attack here and there that were designed to improve their positions. They were made with the knowledge that a last gigantic Austrian offensive was coming. The Italian right wing was behind the Piave River, the center was on the Asiago plateau. It was along this front that the Austrians planned to attack. Their objectives were two: the attack along the lower Piave was aimed at Venice. The Austrian soldiers were to pause the first day at Treviso; the second day Venice itself was to be in their hands. The other objective was the important city of Verona, toward which the armies in the mountains were to march.

This accomplished, the Italian army would be broken, and all Italy open to the invader.

The great assault was begun on June 15th, on a front of nearly one hundred miles. With a last appeal to their loyalty to the empire, with a reminder that in the Venetian plain and in the provinces of Italy was immense plunder, the Austro-Hungarian soldiers were sent upon their last offensive.

Now came days of terrific fighting. The Italians realized that they must stand, if the battle were to end successfully for them. A break anywhere along the line would be almost fatal. The entire nation waited in the utmost anxiety while the soldiers fought for their homes and for the national welfare. And never was Italian bravery more effective. The Austrians did not win a third of their day's objectives at any point, and along many miles they were held in their own trenches. This was true especially in the mountains of the Asiago. Here the lines were at the edge of the mountain region; the Austrians from their height could look down upon the flourishing plains of northern Italy, only a few miles away. A short advance here would take them into open country. But they were not able to win that short space. The Italians, aided by a French division, held firmly, and although their foe sacrificed thousands of men it was in vain. Only at one point, Montello, where the Piave reaches the plains, did the Austrians make any advance along the mountains, and even there they were held after a short gain.

Meanwhile on the lower Piave River the Austrians were meeting with more success. Despite the difficulty in crossing a stream in the face of the enemy, they were able to cross at several points. Pontoon bridges were brought up all ready to put into place, and although many were destroyed, some remained. The Austrians had foreseen the danger of having bridges destroyed, and created great clouds of smoke,

shielding the pontoons from the aviators. The Italian airmen, assisted by British and French aviators, performed feats of the greatest daring to locate the bridges, many of them meeting death as they flew low above the lines.

By June 19th the advance was stopped; the Austrians had forced a number of divisions across the Piave, but had been unable to enlarge their gains, and were met everywhere with the firmest resistance. The Italian army and people, and the whole Entente, breathed freely again. It had been feared that such a powerful attack could not be held without considerable enemy gains, and Venice and other cities were so close to the battle lines that only a few miles' advance would see them engulfed. But Venice was saved, and the rich country of northern Italy was preserved from the ravagers.

On June 20th, and for some days following, a new element entered into the situation. The weather, which the year before had aided the Austro-German armies, now favored the Italians. A great flood swept down the Piave, destroying the pontoon bridges. Many hundreds of Austrians were drowned, and the turbid waters carried out to sea a great mass of *débris*: bodies of soldiers, supplies of all kinds, dead animals—the wreckage of an army. The Italians now pressed hard upon the Austrians across the river, driving them to the farther shore and capturing thousands of prisoners. At the delta of the river the Austrians had established themselves on all the islands during their offensive the previous autumn. In the soft, wet ground trenches could not be dug, and the Austrians defended themselves in small groups under cover of any shelter they could find. The fighting here was hand to hand, lasting through many days. But the enemy was compelled to withdraw, endangered by the flood and harassed by the Italians.

By June 25th the Italians had driven the enemy

across the river everywhere except at the delta, where the struggle continued for ten more days. This put the stamp of unmistakable failure upon the Austrian offensive, a failure so great that in the succeeding days of the battle it was the Italians that attacked and the Austrians that were on the defensive. The battle as a whole is remarkable for the fact that the Italians, who were assailed by a million strong, gained more ground than the Austrians, who were on the offensive; the defenders took half as many prisoners as they lost, an unheard-of feature in an offensive action. It was with utter despair that the Austrian leaders saw their great offensive wrecked. There was not the faintest hope that their army could undertake a new offensive. It was now only a question of time until the end of the war, as far as Austria-Hungary was concerned. The Austrian army was thereafter very much disposed to allow the war to be decided in France and to abide by the result, be it what it might.

The want of action during the following months seemed to prove that the Italians were like minded; especially when the months of Allied victory, August, September, and half of October, were gone without seeing the Italian army undertake more than local attacks. The world was not disposed to be critical, considering that Italy had done her share in holding the lines. But the Italians were under Foch's command, and were ready when he called on them, which was in the latter part of October.

Sixty-three Austro-Hungarian divisions were now confronted by fifty-one Italian divisions, three British, two French, one Czecho-Slovak division, and one American regiment, the three hundred and thirty-second. The final battle of the war in the Italian theater of conflict began on October 24th, exactly a year after the disaster at Caporetto. The Italians and their allies assailed the foe along the entire line from Asiago to the sea. The attack was centered and

the strongest efforts were made in the Mount Grappa region, where plains and mountains meet.

The attacks the first day gained ground, but there were no sensational developments, only three thousand prisoners being taken. The Austrians began to retreat from certain positions at once, and during the following five days the fighting was one of successive positions. By the 28th the Italians were across the Piave almost everywhere. Less than twenty-five thousand prisoners had been taken up to this time.

It was along the edge of the mountains that the greatest success was won, and each day added to it, as the Italians captured one position after another. By the last day of October the Austrian resistance in this region broke down entirely, gaps opened in the line, and a single Italian corps, by a rapid advance, and a daring attack, interposed between the enemy armies on the plains and those in the mountains, cutting the line beyond repair.

From now on the battle became a contest in speed, as the Austrian army fled. Each day saw the enemy more and more disorganized, many units losing all will to fight, asking only to surrender themselves. The Italians swept on over the territory they had lost the previous year, retaking Udine, their former headquarters. One hundred thousand prisoners fell into Italian hands in the next three days, and such was the predicament of the enemy that the entire Austrian army was as good as captured. They did not even destroy their munitions, hundreds of millions of dollars worth of supplies being abandoned.

The Austrian government had been endeavoring for months to gain peace, sending notes repeatedly to America and elsewhere. But under the pressure of this disaster they decided that an immediate armistice was imperative. On October 31st they applied for terms, thus causing great consternation in Germany, where the real condition of affairs was kept from the



people. The Allies presented their terms, they were accepted, and on November 3d, as the victorious Italians entered Trent and Trieste, their objectives for more than three years, the war ended for Italy and Austria.

The terms were equivalent to complete surrender. They provided for the cession of all territory claimed by Italy, the withdrawal and demobilization of the Austrian armies, including any forces in France. To the Allies was reserved the right to march through Austro-Hungarian territory. Practically all naval craft—submarines, battleships, et cetera—were to be surrendered.

For Austria-Hungary it was not only the end of the war, but also the end of the empire. The long threatened revolt of the many races within its borders began even while the government was debating whether to continue war beside Germany, or to seek peace from the Entente. The desperate, war weary, hungry people arose everywhere, and the imperial authority was brought to an end. Hungary declared herself independent. The German parts of Austria did likewise, proclaiming their intention of associating themselves with Germany. The ancient people of Bohemia, an independent nation centuries ago, but since submerged under Austrian rule, declared themselves a free country and people. The southern Slavs arose in turn, to form a new nation founded on racial ties.

The Austrian Empire had endured more than eleven hundred years. Founded in the Middle Ages as the Holy Roman Empire, it exercised sway over half of Europe in the days of its greatness. Nearly all of Central Europe was embraced in its borders—all of Holland, including what is now Belgium, parts of France and Germany, half of Italy, were misgoverned from Vienna. In the person of the emperor—King Charles the Fifth of Austria and Spain—the newly dis-

covered domain in America was an appendage of the ancient empire. But its days had long been numbered, and now were brought to an end. The scepter, which in the hands of earlier Karls, was potent in a score of countries and brought peace or war to a score of peoples, was, in the hands of the new Karl, powerless to rule even Vienna.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### FINAL VICTORY.

The earlier German defeats of 1918, those resulting in the destruction of the four salients of the Lys, Picardy, the Marne, and St. Mihiel, with the attendant losses in men and material, were to the German government a warning to seek peace at once. The subsequent battles added forcibly to the necessity of getting terms. But the German government was fatally handicapped; it could not hope for reasonable terms, or terms which would be reasonable between mutually respecting nations. By its own acts it had cut away the ground upon which it and the Entente nations might come to an understanding. There remained only to seek peace, yet retaining such advantages as were possible.

It was well understood since the entry of the United States into the war that the Allies would not make a peace treaty with the Kaiser's government. The powers in Germany therefore prepared a program intended for the eyes of the enemy. A change in the basic foundation of government took place visibly, and on September 30th a new chancellor, Prince Maximilian, came to the head of affairs. He was made responsible, not to the Kaiser, but to the Reichstag. Plans for a general representative government were hurried. The power of the military authorities, and especially the exclusive war-making power of the Kaiser, was curtailed.

This was preparatory to a direct request for peace. On October 5th the world was startled beyond measure by a note from the German Chancellor to President Wilson, asking that an immediate armistice be granted. He professed to accept, as a basis of peace, the fourteen points and other pronouncements of Mr. Wilson's. It was significant that the universal feeling in America and elsewhere was one of distrust. It seemed incredible that Germany was sincere in her newly professed democracy. The demand in all countries was for rejection of the peace offer.

On October 8th the President replied to the German note, asking if the German government accepted the conditions of peace as outlined by himself. He said that the first condition, as a proof of good faith, was the immediate withdrawal of the German army from Entente countries. The most pertinent part of his note was that which asked the Chancellor if he represented merely the imperial authorities.

Four days later the German foreign secretary answered these questions, reaffirming the desire for peace, and stating that the power of government now rested with the German people. It was then that the President made his real answer to the German peace proposal. In a communication of October 14th, he declared that an armistice must provide for the absolute military supremacy of the United States and the Allies. He charged the Germans with insincerity, pointing to inhuman acts and wanton destruction even then being perpetrated on land and sea. He called for the abolition of every "arbitrary power that could separately, secretly and of its single choice, disturb the peace of the world," saying that the Kaiser's government was of that nature.

This uncompromising reply brought forth approval from every Allied country. To have thus asserted the first principle of democracy in the face of the world's greatest autocracy was an event in history. But it

was hard for the people of the war-ridden nations to believe that the end was near. Years of German savagery left them with the settled opinion that no good thing, not even a good word, could come out of Germany. They were united in desiring that their armies be allowed to destroy the German military power.

The Allied armies were fast closing in on the enemy. In a previous chapter their progress was narrated up to about October 20th. At that period the Americans alone were still meeting with strong resistance. In Belgium and most of France, the Allied advance had overcome the enemy strongholds, and the armies went forward steadily. The Germans left machine guns to fight rear-guard actions, also making a stand at certain strategic towns, as at Valenciennes, in order to give their main armies time to withdraw. All along the line the Allied armies were crossing from France to Belgium, in an advance from the west and south. The German retreat was conducted skillfully. During the last week in October the British were closing in on Valenciennes, meeting with sharp resistance, protected as the city was by the Scheldt River. It was not until November 2d that the Canadians captured the city.

The French armies of Debeney, Mangin, and Berthelot had the greatest distance to traverse in order to reach the frontier. Their objectives were Maubeuge, Hirson, Mezières, and other important towns and fortresses along the frontier. On October 25th the French broke through the last organized line, and thereafter made rapid advances toward their goals. They did not permit the Germans to rest anywhere, and gave them no opportunity to form a new line of resistance.

Scores of Belgian and French towns were being rescued each day. They had been imprisoned for years inside the German wall of blood and iron.

Some of these towns were in ruins, from which half-starved survivors emerged as their oppressors departed. Other places were left intact, indicating that the Germans intended to remain there for years to come. The Germans had prepared to destroy Bruges and the Belgian and French cities, when President Wilson's note concerning such destruction impelled them to change their policy overnight. Bruges was left unharmed. The destruction was widespread and complete to desolation as it was. Factories and every kind of manufacturing and commercial facilities were burned, broken, or otherwise destroyed. Homes were burned, or pillaged, works of art stolen, or destroyed. Not since the days of the Spanish Inquisition had Belgium suffered such cruelty and indignity.

If the Germans had any hesitation about complying with the Allied demands, any hope that complete surrender could be averted, their doubts were settled by the rebellion of German sailors. Early in November the naval authorities decided upon a last desperate sortie of the entire German navy, realizing that the only result would be that the ships would go down with colors flying. Orders were issued to all the ships of the fleet to prepare for action. But the German sailors had no mind to be sacrificed to uphold the honor of the dying empire. The crew of one battleship mutinied, seized control of the vessel and raised the red flag. The fleet admiral surrounded the rebellious ship, and gave notice to the mutineers that they had a certain time in which to submit. German sailors were confronted with the necessity of killing their comrades; gunners waited for the orders that would sink one of their own ships. Before the hours of grace elapsed, however, the mutiny spread to the whole fleet. The men took possession of all the warships, overthrew the authority of officers, many of whom fled. The Kaiser's brother, Prince Henry, was among those that departed in haste. The rebellion spread to



Hamburg, Bremen, and other cities, signaling the last hour of the German Empire.

With the ground crumbling under them the German autocracy hastened to conclude an armistice. The voice of the people now demanded that the war be brought to an end. There were threats against the war lords, no longer whispered, but shouted aloud.

A third note between the German government and President Wilson had been written and answered; the Germans outlining their steps toward democracy, and declaring that orders had been issued forbidding the destruction of any but military objects, and forbidding the sinking of merchant vessels. The President reiterated the grounds of distrust of German intentions, ending by saying that surrender, not negotiations, must be a prelude to peace as long as the autocracy retained any degree of power. General Ludendorff's resignation was announced immediately afterward. He was considered to have been the virtual director of Germany during the last year. On October 27th the German government sent a brief note to America, saying they awaited negotiations along the lines of the terms outlined.

Representatives of the Allied powers and the United States now met to formulate the terms of an armistice; and having agreed upon it, the President, in a final note of November 5th, informed the German government that the terms were in the hands of Marshal Foch, and that they should apply to him. This they did at once, and on the following day German delegates appeared at the battle front, were permitted to pass, and were escorted to the Allied commander in chief, who read to them the terms to which they must submit.

As the negotiations proceeded, the Allied armies did likewise, their progress during the closing days of the war promising to turn the German retreat into a rout, with wholesale captures. But instead of a final

tremendous Armageddon with the German standards falling in a last vortex of battle, the war was ending almost tamely, as the Germans retreated everywhere. On November 11th, the last day of the war, the British entered the town of Mons in southern Belgium. It was at Mons that the British army entered the Great War. Compelled to retreat from the town in August, 1914, they promised themselves to return some day. Only a few of the original army were left to return, but their comrades carried out their promise. Belgians, British, French and Americans, all were advancing toward Germany on November 11th, with only a breaking army to oppose them.

In Germany all interest centered in the Kaiser, as the chief obstacle to peace. Each day added to the clamor for his dethronement, and each day following the sailors' revolt saw republics proclaimed in several German States. Finally, on November 9th, the Kaiser abdicated, fleeing to Holland the following day, an inglorious ending of one of the most theatrical careers of history.

And on November 11th, in the fifty-second month of the great war, hostilities came to an end with the signing of the armistice. In a struggle far exceeding that of any other conflict in the history of mankind, right triumphed over might; autocracy was conquered by democracy; potentates fell before champions of the people; civilized savagery was crushed by the armies of the Christian nations. A war involving millions of men was over at last; some of the nations were prostrate, some of the peoples were temporarily deprived of reason, all of the countries were terribly wounded, all were gasping from exhaustion.

In this the greatest of all wars, this most stupendous of crimes, Germany mobilized about eight million soldiers. Of these, more than five million suffered death or wounds. Austria-Hungary called upon four millions of its men, with casualties exceeding two million,

not including prisoners. Russia armed nearly twelve million men. In this most splendid of sacrifices for the common welfare of mankind, France and Britain each gave five millions of her citizens.

The losses of the war were terrifying. Not a village, hardly a home, in the warring countries but mourned for its dead. Britain's killed, counting the casualties of the whole empire, numbered more than six hundred and fifty thousand men, with total casualties of more than three million. Of the dead, nearly forty thousand were officers. Canadians to the number of four hundred thousand went overseas; sixty thousand were killed in action, and more than two hundred thousand paid a price for the welfare of the world. Australia's losses were similar. New Zealand had a unique record; with casualties numbering a little less than sixty thousand, with sixteen thousand five hundred dead, only forty-five of her soldiers were taken prisoner.

French losses were heavier even than the British, the dead exceeding one million one hundred thousand, the total casualties numbering four million seven hundred and sixty-two thousand eight hundred. Italian losses were heavy for the limited battle front. Mobilizing about five million soldiers, fully half of them were numbered among the killed, wounded, prisoners or missing, with half a million dead. Belgium, Serbia, and Roumania each lost from two hundred thousand to three hundred thousand men.

But the sorrow of the war was for the moment forgotten in a universal outburst of joy. In every Allied country, men, women, and children hailed with delight the end of the war and the greatness of the victory. To have compelled Germany to surrender seemed the greatest achievement in history. In San Francisco, where people knew little of war, they rejoiced equally with Paris, which knew the horrors of it. New York, which saw only live soldiers, was as

happy as London, which had suffered death and destruction from the air. The smallest villages of inland America celebrated the doom of the piratical submarine. The terrorized people of the war area of France smiled again, and little children first learned that they need no longer fear a soldier. In the greatest holiday the world has ever known, cheering crowds filled the streets of every city in every land, reveling in a common joy that knew no frontiers.

To the soldiers on the battlefields the change from warfare to peace came with startling suddenness. At one moment they were in the midst of battle, with the guns roaring as they had roared for years. Comrades were falling as comrades had fallen during those long years. The next moment the noise of battle ceased and a quiet, such as northern France had not known for fifty-two long months, came upon the fields of conflict. To stand in the open at one moment was to invite death, to walk across no man's land the next moment was merely a breach of discipline. To kill an enemy was at one moment a duty, to do so the next moment would have been a crime. In the twinkling of an eye, five hundred miles of battle front passed from war to peace, and men sat on trench parapets in no fear from a sniper's bullet. The millions of huge shells filled with deadly explosives, which had been the very mainstay of freedom and the fiery road to victory, had become, in a moment, an expensive assembly of useless steel and chemicals. The night of November 11th was the first of one thousand five hundred and thirty-one nights in which the lurid fires of battle did not present the semblance of hell and the bursting shells make hell a reality.

The terms of the armistice imposed upon Germany were little short of surrender. The very severity of them astounded and delighted the world. That Germany should have accepted such a humiliating peace



argued even greater exhaustion than the Allies had supposed.

Germany was ordered to evacuate the invaded lands in Belgium, Luxemburg, France, and Alsace-Lorraine. Also to yield German territory as far as the Rhine to the Allies, subject to the final treaty of peace. The Allies were to be permitted to establish bridge heads—fortified areas across the river—at important cities on the Rhine. The following military supplies were to be surrendered: Five thousand cannon, twenty-five thousand machine guns, seventeen hundred aëroplanes, five thousand locomotives, one hundred and fifty thousand cars, five thousand motor trucks.

Prisoners of war were to be released, without reciprocity on the part of the Allies. All civilian inhabitants were to be repatriated. Military supplies not removable were to accrue to the Allies, the railway systems of the occupied countries were to be left in good condition.

The Germans were to withdraw from the territories of their former allies, were to evacuate Russia, subject to local conditions as directed by the Entente; they were ordered to restore Roumania, and to renounce the greedy treaties with those two countries.

It was in naval conditions that the armistice was most severe. All submarines of all classes were to be surrendered, at a date to be fixed. And not only submarines but also many surface warships were to be delivered, as follows: Six battle cruisers, ten battleships, eight light cruisers, and fifty destroyers, all of the most modern types. The Allies were to continue the existing blockade, while Germany was to remove all obstacles to trade in the Baltic, was to assist in locating and destroying mines, was to surrender all merchant ships belonging to the Allied nations.

The terms of the armistice were carried out. On November 21st occurred an event entirely without a parallel in history. On that date the German battle



fleet surrendered to Admiral Beatty of the British navy.

The German fleet was ordered to proceed to a certain place in the North Sea, about sixty miles off the coast of Scotland. The British grand fleet, together with five American dreadnaughts, was drawn up in a double column miles long. Every man was at his battle station, prepared for action, in case the Germans should attempt treachery. A single British light cruiser went forth to meet the oncoming German "battle fleet," defenseless except for the potent might of Britain, and hoisted the signal "Follow me."

Led by this small cruiser, the *Cardiff*, the German ships meekly steamed between the lines of British and American warships, and proceeded to their appointed anchorage. All the plans of war lords, as embodied in those mighty machines, were thus brought to a humiliating end. The strength of armor and the power of guns were of no avail without the daring sailors such as John Paul Jones and Horatio Nelson commanded.

No nation in the annals of mankind ever gave up so powerful a weapon. The Greeks at Salamis won one of the greatest sea battles of history against greater odds. The men of Drake and Howard were not daunted by the overwhelming strength of the Spanish Armada. But the Germans, who for years had longed for the "Day" that should see them meet the British fleet, found it to be the most degrading of all the days of a proud people.

Twenty submarines were surrendered on November 20th, another flotilla on the following day, and others on succeeding days until one hundred and twenty-nine U-boats had been delivered into the keeping of Great Britain. The great weapon of murder on the high seas thus passed forever from the evil hands of those that wielded it. It was the end of a dreadful nightmare. No more need ships scurry through the night

with lights shrouded; no more need passengers and crew fear the terrible shock of a torpedo.

In the eyes of the German people, there was a certain triumph in the fact that the war ended with their soldiers on enemy soil. To many of the poorer class the homecoming of their men was the return of victors. It needed the fulfillment of the terms of the armistice to convince the Germans that their armies had been terribly beaten.

Immediately after November 11th the enemy gathered up his armies and belongings and started back to Germany. As the Germans retreated, the Allies advanced. Antwerp was occupied after a week, while on November 22d the Belgian King reëntered Brussels, the capital, amidst the wildest joy of the people. On November 19th General Pétain entered the old and new French city of Metz. On the same day he was made a Marshal of France, in recognition of his services to France, which were second only to those of Foch and Joffre. And to all the redeemed cities came the liberating armies—to Strassburg, to Namur, to Louvain, and finally to Liège, where the Germans started on their terrible career of conquest.

On past the frontiers of Germany the enemy forces retreated, and after them followed the Allied armies. The Belgians occupied the northernmost strip of Rhineland, the British held the adjoining territory with their main position at Cologne. The American army of occupation administered three thousand square miles of Germany, including the city of Coblenz and its bridgehead across the Rhine. The French held territory centering in Mayence, besides administering all of Alsace-Lorraine.

The unconquerable Germany was conquered, the Rhine that they declared would be defended to the last man, was yielded tamely to the enemy. The German ambition to rule Europe served only to deluge Europe in blood, and finally to bring their most beloved lands

into the hands of the intended victims. All the pomp and majesty of the Kaiser were stripped from him, all his plans and schemes were brought to nothing. The German name had become a thing of reproach, their civilization a shame. The democracy of France, Britain, and America, enduring to the end, toiling through the darkest night of centuries, had now won to a new day.

## France's Tribute to First United States Soldiers Who Fell in France.

The following eulogy was a part of the ceremony at the burial in northern France, of the first three American soldiers who lost their lives. The words were spoken by a French officer. He said: "In the name of the ——th division, in the name of the French Army, and in the name of France, I bid farewell to Private Enright, Private Gresham, and Private Hay of the American Army. Of their own free will they had left a prosperous and happy country to come over here. They knew war was continuing in Europe; they knew that the forces, fighting for honor, love of justice and civilization, were still checked by the long-prepared forces serving the powers of brutal domination, oppression and barbarity. They knew that efforts were still necessary. They wished to give us their generous hearts, and they had not forgotten old historical memories, while others forget more recent ones. They ignored nothing of the circumstances, and nothing had been concealed from them—neither the length and hardships of war, nor the violence of battle, nor the dreadfulness of new weapons, nor the perfidy of the foe. Nothing stopped them. They accepted the hard and strenuous life; they crossed the ocean at great peril; they took their places at the front by our side, and they have fallen facing the foe in a hard and desperate hand-to-hand fight. Honor to them. Their families, friends, and fellow-citizens will be proud when they hear of their deaths.

“Men! These graves, the first to be dug in our national soil, and but a short distance from the enemy, are as a mark of the mighty land we and our Allies firmly cling to in the common task, confirming the will of the people and the army of the United States to fight with us to a finish, ready to sacrifice as long as is necessary until final victory for the most noble of causes, that of the liberty of nations, the weak as well as the mighty. Thus the deaths of these humble soldiers appear to us with extraordinary grandeur. We will, therefore, ask that the mortal remains of these young men be left here, left with us forever. We inscribe on the tombs: ‘Here lie the first soldiers of the Republic of the United States to fall on the soil of France for liberty and justice.’ The passerby will stop and uncover his head. Travelers and men of heart will go out of their way to come here to pay their respective tributes. Private Enright, Private Gresham, Private Hay! In the name of France I thank you. God receive your souls. Farewell!”



# CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR.

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## 1914.

June 28.—Murder of Austrian Grand Duke Francis Ferdinand.

July 23.—First Austrian demands on Serbia.

August 1.—Germany declared war on Russia.

August 3.—Germany declared war on France.

August 4.—Germany invaded Belgium. Great Britain declared war on Germany.

August 5 to October 12.—Conquest of Belgium.

August 20.—Brussels captured.

August 22 and 23.—British and French defeated in Belgium.

August 27.—Great Russian defeat at Tannenberg.

September 1.—German advance into France. Russian invasion of Galicia.

September 6 to 10.—Battle of the Marne.

September 15 to 25.—Battle of Aisne. Beginning of deadlock.

September 22.—Submarine sank three British cruisers.

October 9.—Antwerp captured.

October 20 to November 25.—First battle of Ypres (Yser). Germans fail to win Channel ports.

October and November.—Great battles in Poland and Galicia.

November 5.—England declares war on Turkey.

November 7.—Japanese capture Tsing Tao, in China.

December 8.—British win naval victory in South Atlantic.

December 24.—First air raid on England.

## 1915.

January 25.—British naval victory in North Sea.

February 2.—Turks attack Suez Canal.

February 18.—Submarine blockade of British Isles declared.

February-March.—Allied fleet attack Dardanelles.

March 22.—Russians capture Przemyśl.

April 22 to May 15.—Second battle of Ypres.

April 25.—British land at Gallipoli.

May 2.—Germans break Russian line. Great retreat begun.

May 7.—"Lusitania" sunk.

May 13.—Wilson's first "Lusitania" note.

May 3.—Italy entered war.

May to August.—Greatest attacks at Gallipoli.

July to October.—German conquest of Poland and western Russia.

August 6.—Warsaw captured.

September 25 to 28.—Anglo-French assault at Loos and Vimy Ridge. French assault in Champagne.

October, November, and December.—Austro-German-Bulgarian conquest of Serbia and Montenegro.

October 5.—Anglo-French expedition landed at Salonica.

December 15.—Sir Douglas Haig appointed commander of British.

### 1916.

January 8.—Evacuation of Gallipoli.

February 21 to December.—Battles of Verdun.

February 24.—Germans take Fort Douaumont.

February and March.—Russian victories in Asia Minor.

April 29.—British force in Mesopotamia surrendered.

May 16 to June 4.—Austrian offensive in Italy.

May 31.—Naval battle of Jutland.

June 4.—Greatest Russian offensive begun.

June 5.—Lord Kitchener lost at sea.

July 1.—Anglo-French offensive on Somme begun.

August to November.—Great Italian offensive.

August 9.—Italians capture Gorizia.

August 27.—Italy declares war on Germany. Roumania entered war. Russian advance checked.

September 15.—British use first tanks in war. Roumanian invasion of Hungary checked.

September 26.—British take Combles.

October, November, and December.—Conquest of Roumania.

November.—New British attack along the Ancre.

December 6.—Germans capture Bucharest.

December 7.—Lloyd George becomes premier of England.

December 12.—Germany proposed peace.

December 15.—Great French victory at Verdun.

### 1917.

February 1.—Germans began ruthless submarine warfare.

February 3.—United States broke relations with Germany.

March 11.—British capture Bagdad.

- March 15.—Abdication of Czar. Russian Revolution.  
 March 17 to 21.—Germans retreat to Hindenburg Line.  
 April and May.—Period of greatest sinkings by submarines.  
 April 6.—United States declares war with Germany.  
 April 9.—Canadians capture Vimy Ridge. Battle of Arras continued April-May.  
 April 16.—French assault on Rheims-Soissons front.  
 May 4.—American warships in English waters.  
 May to September.—Continuous Italian assaults on Isonzo front.  
 May 15.—General Pétain becomes commander of French army.  
 June 5.—Draft registration in United States.  
 June 7.—British take Messines Ridge.  
 June 26.—First American soldiers in France.  
 July.—Last Russian offensive. Kerensky in power.  
 July to November.—British attacks at Ypres.  
 September 4.—Germans capture Riga.  
 October 24.—Italian defeat at Caporetto. Army broken.  
 November and December.—Italians defend line of Piave River.  
 October 23 to November 1.—French assault on Chemin des Dames.  
 November 7.—Bolsheviki seize power in Russia. Kerensky overthrown.  
 November 13.—Clémenceau premier of France.  
 November 22.—Victory of British tanks at Cambrai.  
 December 7.—United States declared war on Austria-Hungary.  
 December 10.—Jerusalem captured.

### 1918.

- January 8.—President Wilson's fourteen points.  
 February 9.—Germany made separate peace with Ukraine.  
 March 3.—Russians made peace with Germany.  
 March 21.—Tremendous German offensive begun.  
 March 23.—British lines broken.  
 March 24.—Bapaume recaptured by Germans.  
 March 29.—General Foch made Allied Commander in Chief.  
 March 29.—Long-distance bombardment of Paris. German offensive checked.  
 March 30.—Germans held at Vimy Ridge.

- April 9.—New German offensive south of Ypres.
- April 10.—British retreat in Ypres region.
- April 12.—Haig orders British to hold till death.
- April 25.—Germans make last attempt to break through near Ypres. Capture Mont Kemmel. Renew assault near Amiens. British attack submarine bases.
- May to October.—Great American troop movement to France.
- May 27.—Third German offensive begun on Aisne front.
- May 29.—Soissons captured, wedge made in French lines.
- May 31.—Germans reach Marne River.
- June 2 to 11.—French and Americans defend road to Paris.
- June 9.—Fourth German offensive begun near Noyon.
- June 11.—French check German assault. American Marines in Belleau Wood.
- June 15.—Last Austrian offensive in Italy.
- June 25.—Italy breaks Austrian attack and drives back the enemy.
- July 15.—Last German offensive. Attack on both sides of Rheims.
- July 17.—Germans suffer great losses, fail to advance.
- July 18.—Foch begins campaign to end war. French and Americans attack Marne salient.
- July 20.—Germans driven across Marne.
- July 30.—Germans retreat from salient.
- August 8.—Second Allied offensive. British attack near Amiens.
- August 16.—French assault near Noyon.
- August 23.—Foch made Marshal of France.
- August 25.—British advance to old Somme battlefield.
- August 29.—Bapaume and Noyon recaptured.
- August 31.—Germans leave Lys salient.
- September 2.—British break into Drocourt-Queant line.
- September 5.—German retreat on hundred-mile front.
- September 12.—American army takes St. Mihiel salient.
- September 17.—Allied offensive in Balkans begun. Germans driven back to Hindenburg line.
- September 19.—British offensive in Palestine. Turkish front broken.
- September 23.—Turkish army dispersed.
- September 26.—Americans begin Argonne campaign. Seven miles' advance first day.

September 28.—Allied assault in Belgium.

September 30.—Bulgaria surrenders. Damascus captured.

October 1.—St. Quentin captured.

October 6.—Germany asks for peace.

October 8.—Final assault on Hindenburg line; British break through.

October 9.—Cambrai captured. Germans retreat.

October 13.—French take Laon and La Fère.

October 14.—Allied attack in Belgium wins vital territory. Germans begin to evacuate Belgian coast. Wilson's reply to German peace offer.

October 15.—Americans fighting on Kreimhilde line.

October 17.—Ostend captured.

October 18.—Belgian coast cleared.

October 24.—Italy begins last campaign.

October 30.—Italy breaks Austrian front.

October 30.—Turkey surrenders.

November 1.—American army breaks German resistance. Rapid advance begun.

November 2.—British capture Valenciennes.

November 4.—Austrian surrender and armistice.

November 5.—President Wilson notified Germany terms are formulated.

November 6.—Americans cut vital German line.

November 9.—German envoys apply for armistice. Kaiser abdicates.

November 10.—Kaiser's flight to Holland.

November 11.—Germany accepts armistice terms.

November 21.—German High Seas Fleet surrendered.

December 1.—American army entered Germany.

December 3.—British army entered Germany.

December 16.—American army at Coblenz. British army at Cologne.



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